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Spousal Abuse Counseling
Program - Rankin Inlet
MANUAL FOR COUNSELORS
APC-TS 4 CA (2006)

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Spousal Abuse Counseling Program

MANUAL FOR COUNSELORS

Pulaarvik Kablu
Friendship Centre

Rankin Inlet
Nunavut

Table of Contents

About the Manual 1

- Production of the manual 1

Description of the Program and of the Groups for Abusers and Victims........ 6

Intake Protocol 16

Topics of sessions for Abuser's Group 17

Handouts for Abuser's group 132

- Handout 2.1: Finding YOUR Warning signs........ 133
- Handout 2.2: Warning Signs 134
- Crossing the Lines 134
- Handout 2.3: A Basic Safety Plan for Abusers:........ 135
- Handout 3.1:Defining Abuse 137
- Relationship Rules (RR)#1, Rules 1 - 5 138
- Handout 4.1: Circle of Violence........ 139
- Handout 4.2: Cycle of Abuse 140
- Handout 5.1: Power and Control Wheel........ 141
- Handout 7.1: Time Out wallet card........ 142
- Relationship Rules (RR)#2, Rules 6 - 10 143
- Equality Wheel 144
- Relationship Rules (RR)#3, Rules 11 - 16 145
- Relationship Rules (RR)#4, Rules 17 – 21 146
- Handout 19.1: Decision-making and dominance. 147
- Handout: 21.1: Self-Talk 148
- Handout 22.1 Life Story Form........ 149
- Relationship Rules (RR)#5, Rules 22 - 25 150

Topics of Sessions for Victim's Group 151

- Crossing the Lines 159

Handouts for Victims Group 255

- Handout 1.1: Warning Signs 256
- Crossing the Lines 256
- Handout 1.2: Finding Your Partner's Warning signs........ 257
- Handout 1.3: Signs Before Violence 258

Handout 1.4: Safety Planning for Victims....259
Handout 1.5: A Basic Safety Strategy for Victims....261
Handout 2.1 Defining Abuse (Victims' Program)....264
Relationship Rules (RR)#1, Rules 1 - 5....265
Handout 5.1: The Cycle of Violence....266
Handout 5.2: Cycle of Violence Stories....267
Handout 5.3: Power and Control Wheel....269
Handout 9.1: Equality Wheel....270
Relationship Rules (RR)#2, Rules 6 – 10....271
Handout 9.2: Understanding Self-Esteem....272
Relationship Rules (RR)#3, Rules 11 - 16....274
Relationship Rules (RR)#4, Rules 17 – 21....275
Handout 21.1: How decisions are made in your family....276
Handout 27.1: Leaving an Abusive Relationship: A Toolkit for Leaving....277
Relationship Rules (RR)#5, Rules 22 - 25....284

About the Manual

Production of the manual

This manual is used as a guide for group counselling under the Rankin Inlet Spousal Abuse Counseling Program. It was produced during the first year of the program, in 2002, and has been revised in 2005 based on recommendations from the two counselors, an external evaluator, and Government of Canada representatives, and the Steering Committee for the program.

Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre is a non-profit society registered under the Nunavut Societies Act. This manual has been created for the benefit of the people of Nunavut. It cannot be sold for profit. However, any portion of it can be photocopied and distributed.

To produce this manual the writers have, on occasion, adapted material or quoted directly from other publications. The Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre has made every effort to obtain the authorization to do so and in all cases these publications have been acknowledged. The Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre apologizes if material has been adapted or quoted without the permission of the author, and will add any missing references to authors or publications in the next printing, or remove copyrighted material if requested by its author in writing.

The views and opinions expressed in this manual are those of the Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre and do not necessarily reflect those of organizations who provided contributions or assistance.

As the vast majority of spousal abuse offences reported to the police involve men as offenders, and as men usually make up the majority of participants in the group for abusers, we have used the masculine “he”, “him” or “his” throughout the manual when referring to members of the abusers’ group, and the feminine when referring to participants in the victims’ group. However, it is important to realize that those involved in the delivery of this program strongly feel that the issue of spousal abuse is not gender-specific – that women also can abuse. The material is simply easier to understand if we do not continually have to use the words "the abuser" or "the victim", or "they", but can replace it with the shorter "he" or "she". As much as possible, we have used the words "group members" or "participant" or "client".

Finally, this manual should be considered a tool to be used to guide the counselor in the delivery of group counseling. It does not replace proper training for a counselor, nor does it replace good judgment or common sense. Counselors must be able to modify the material in the manual to suit their own methods of delivering the program and to suit the group with which they are working.

Acknowledgments

The Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre acknowledges the publications that have been used, referred to or quoted from to produce this manual:

- Neidig, P. H., Friedman, D. H., Spouse abuse: A treatment program for couples, Research Press Company, 1984.
- Molzahn, D., Journey to health through grief.
- Status of Women Council of the N.W.T., Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, From Dark to Light: Regaining a Caring Community.
- Domestic Abuse Project (DAP), Minnesota, USA, Men's Treatment Program Manual, 1993, Women Who Abuse in Intimate Relationships (1998), Group Work with Adolescents: Ending the Intergenerational Cycle of Domestic Violence (2000).
- Yukon Justice, Family Violence Prevention Unit, Whitehorse, Yukon, Assaultive Husbands Program.

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Resources

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Health and Social Services, Rankin Inlet, Nunavut
JP Court/Community Justice Committee, Rankin Inlet, Nunavut
Katauyaq (Women shelter), Rankin Inlet, Nunavut
Department of Justice, Iqaluit, Nunavut
Legal Services Board of Nunavut, Gjoa Haven, Nunavut
Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, Ottawa, Ontario
Status of Women Council of the N.W.T., Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tupiq, the Inuit Program, Fenbrook, Ontario
Yukon Justice, Family Violence Prevention Unit, Whitehorse, Yukon

Videos being used in the program:

"Abusive Relationships" (Canadian Learning Company Inc., English, 17 minutes)
This video is about Lynn, a nineteen-year old abused by her boyfriend. The video is designed to show what it means to be abused in a relationship and to learn more about physical, and emotional and verbal abuse. It also shows warning signs of potential abuse. To purchase this video call Canadian Learning Company Inc, Woodstock, Ontario, (800) 267-2977

"Summer in the Life of Louisa" (Health Canada, Inuktitut, English subtitles, 25 minutes)
This video is about an Inuk woman named Louisa, who lives with an abusive husband. It shows how she tries to deal with the violence and how they work out a solution. To purchase this video, send a fax (613) 954-8107 to Health Canada, Health Programs Support Division, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Ottawa, Ontario, or order online from: The First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Publication Resource Centre, at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnihb/bpm/prc/prc_orderform.htm

"Reflections from the Heart of a Child" #3766/0795 (Hazelden Foundation, English, 30 minutes)
This video portrays the impact of abuse on a family as the lives of three children are ravaged by a father's alcoholism and abuse and a mother's inability to cope.*

"One Hit Leads to Another" #8317/2130 (Victoria Women's Transition House Society, English, 15 minutes)
This video combines "real life" interviews with dramatized scenarios comprised of many actual stories told by abused women, their partners and counselors. Designed to destroy the myths surrounding the issue of wife assault. *

"Time to Change" #8425/2140 (Victoria Family Violence Prevention Society, English, 26 minutes)

This video continues the story of characters John and Sylvia introduced in One hit leads to another. Time to change focuses on John's story – his anguish, treatment and his taking responsibility. *

* To purchase these videos #3766/0795, #8317/2130 and #8425/2140), call Kineticvideo, Toronto, Ontario, (800) 263-6910 or order online from www.kineticvideo.com.

Description of the Program and of the Groups for Abusers and Victims

What is the Spousal Abuse Counseling Program?

The Spousal Abuse Counseling Program is designed to provide counseling to people who are in the initial stages of developing an abusive lifestyle and who wish to change. The main counseling program is for abusers (Court-mandated), there is a parallel program for victims of abuse and in some cases family members, as well as an educational outreach program.

What are the goals of the program?

- Reducing incidence of domestic violence and spousal abuse in the community.
- Paramount consideration of the safety of the victims and families as well as the needs of the persons who abuse through the operation of a different counseling program for each.
- Operating the program with input and support from the community, particularly from respected Elders, so that it suits the needs of the community and incorporates traditional Inuit knowledge.
- Delivering a therapeutically sound and culturally appropriate program, which focuses on changing controlling behaviour and extreme emotional dependence.

What are the principles of the program?

- Violence is not an acceptable behaviour under any circumstance.
- The safety of victims and families is the highest priority throughout the delivery of the program.
- Violence is a matter of choice; a person can choose not to be violent.
- People are accountable for their own behaviour.

What makes this program unique?

- It was developed with the input and support of the community of Rankin Inlet and is the first program of its kind in Nunavut.
- It takes into consideration what the victims have said over and over again: they want help, they do not want their spouse to be sent to jail and removed from the community, they want them to get counseling, they want the violence to stop.
- A committee composed of respected Inuit Elders is involved in the delivery of the program. Elders participate in some group sessions and provide support to the abusers so they can take their place back in their family and in the community and be valued, and help the family to heal and begin a new journey. They have also offered continuing help on a volunteer basis for program participants who want assistance after they are out of the program.
- The counselors provide counseling in the language of the participants: Inuktitut or English.
- A Casework/Advisory Committee composed of members of the community advise on particular cases and meet weekly or biweekly when when group counseling is being delivered.

What is the group for abusers?

It is the main part of the program for abusers. The full program includes individual counseling before the abuser joins the group and between group sessions, as well as exit interviews and concluding counseling after the abuser has completed all the group sessions.

When can a person join the group?

After the acceptance process in the program is completed and when a new group begins. A person could have to wait a few weeks until a new group begins, and, in such case, will be provided with individual counselling during the interim time.

Can a person's participation in the group be prematurely terminated?

Yes, for reasons such as:

- In the opinion of the counselor, the person is interfering with and affecting the benefits of the program to other members of the group.
- In the opinion of the counselor, the person is not benefiting from the group sessions or fails to attend three sessions.
- The person is involved in additional domestic violence.
- The person has committed a criminal offence.
- The person came to a session(s) intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

What happens if a person fails to attend a session(s)?

The counselor must inform the Prosecutor in writing of the fact that the client is not attending. A person who misses 3 sessions will be referred back to the Court.

What is the group for victims?

It is the main part of the program for victims, which is a separate program running parallel to the abusers counseling program. The victims' program offers individual emergency counseling before the victim joins the group, an intake interview, individual counseling as needed between group sessions, as well as exit interviews and concluding counseling after the participant has completed all the group sessions.

Who can be accepted in the program for victims?

A man or a woman:

- Whose partner has been accepted in the program for abusers.
- Whom the counselor considers may benefit from the program.
- Who has expressed a wish to join the program, and feels he/she can commit to the time.

When can a person join the group?

A person can join the counseling group for victims at any time. Everything works best if the person joins as close to the beginning of the program as possible. In this way, not much is missed.

What if a person does not attend a session(s)?

The Victims' program is voluntary. There are no penalties if a person does not attend a session of the program for victims.

The counselor will encourage attendance of all sessions, but the extent of a person's involvement will depend on the strength of personal commitment, the resolve to explore and deal with the abuse and change the effect violence has had on the life of the family. To some extent, it also depends on the reaction of the partner. If the situation degenerates, and a person is not able to attend a session or sessions, we fully understand. However it is extremely important to keep us informed so that appropriate steps can be taken regarding the abuser.

What are the group sessions like?

Originally there were 36 group sessions in the program for both abusers and victims, which lasts approximately 18 weeks. (We use the term "approximately" because of the severe weather so characteristic of Rankin Inlet, sessions occasionally have to be cancelled due to several-day storms in winter.)

This revision provides for the combination of several of the original sessions to allow the addition of at least four sessions of couples counseling for each participant during the group program. Because these sessions usually can be offered (at different times of day) during the same weeks that the groups are meeting, it is possible that the overall length of each cycle can be shortened, thus allowing for more cycles during a year. We will need to experiment with this to see if it is feasible.

The following table provides an approximate summary of the counseling contact hours involved in this program.

Type of Session	**Intake**	**Individual** **(Emergency or solo)**	**Group**		**Couples**	**Exit counseling**	**Total counseling**
			Counselors	**Elders**			
# of sessions	2	3-4	25	2-4	4-5	2-4	38 - 43
# of hours	2 hr.	3-4 hr.	50	4-8	8-10 hr.	2-4	71 - 78

The schedule may vary by the program cycle, however, as there are many considerations that go into scheduling. The total amount of counselling time per participant remains about the same as in the original plan.

The sessions:

- Take place in a secure environment, in a room that is sufficiently soundproof to ensure confidentiality.
- Involve a maximum of 9 participants with one counselor for abusers and 12 participants with one counsellor for victims. In addition, Elder counselors participate in a number of sessions throughout the program, and this varies according to need and the availability of the Elders. Occasionally, resource persons are asked to address the group on a specific topic.
- Couples counselling is also offered if it is wanted by both members of the couple, and if the counsellors both feel it is appropriate and safe for both. The victim must agree that couples counselling is desirable.
- Are held in Inuktitut or in English depending on the language of the group members. If a translator is needed, one is employed.

Each session follows this general plan:

- Opening of session:
  Counselor takes attendance and reminds everyone of group rules.

- Check-in:
  - Each person has a chance to say how he or she feels, explain problems that he/she had since the last session and talk about what happened.
  - This helps people clear their minds from other thoughts before the activities and promotes awareness of other people's feelings.
  - Coloured markers can be used to fill out the attendance sheet for check-in. A person is asked to choose a colour to show his/her feelings (ex: red for angry, yellow for sad, green for happy, blue for moody, etc.).

- Agenda:

  The counselor explains the agenda for the session.

- Activity:

  Generally there is one activity per session. The purpose of the activity is to help people stay safe, heal, learn more about themselves, learn new ways to act and how to see things differently (use of flipchart, hand-outs and videos). The counselor can ask members of the group to do a "homework" exercise for the next session(s), and often encourage participants to keep a personal notebook.

- Check-out:
  - Each person has a chance to say how he/she feels after the session and what he/she learned.
  - Useful for summing up the session and can help people feel positive about what will happen after it.
  - The counselor may ask members of the group to think about something or write something in preparation for the next session.
  - The counselor reminds everyone to keep in mind his/her safety plan.

* There is a 10-minute break at a convenient time during the session.

Home Visits as a part of the Victims' Program

The Victims' program counselor often does home visits. These are not surprise visits, but are arranged in advance by discussing at the group session or arranged by phone call and take place at scheduled time that is convenient.

The reason for the visits is to have a chance to talk to the client in private, and to interact with the client in her/his own home. We try to do these visits while school age children are at school.

If an individual has any fear or hesitation about these visits, they are not done.

Involvement of Elders in the Counseling program.

The role of the Elders in this program is an important one, as they can affect the attitudes and behaviour of the participants over a longer period than that of the counseling sessions.

Elders are not trained as professional counselors, but are expected to support the work of the counselors in contributing their wisdom.

A workshop held once per year will help ensure that participating Elders know the principles behind the program, understand the intake protocols, their own roles in delivering the program, and will follow the general rules under which the program is run.

Couples Counseling

It is the opinion of both counselors, confirmed by interviews with participants during the external evaluation late in 2004, that couples counseling in some cases would be a useful addition to the Rankin Inlet Spousal Abuse Counseling Program. Both partners must agree that the couples counselling would be beneficial to their relationship and would not be threatening to either person.

In most cases, this counseling needs to be done with individual couples, not in a group setting. Both counselors will attend, and strict rules will be adhered to in order to reduce the risk to either member of the couple. Occasionally, couples counselling is done in a group.

The setting will be a bit more formal than individual counseling in that it will be held in the counseling room, at the table, and the meeting will be chaired by one or both of the counselors. Elders may occasionally help with the couples' counselling, at the request of the clients and at the discretion of the counsellors.

Adding these sessions to the already crowded schedule will not work, so we have decided to combine several sessions of the group program, and to offer the sessions on couples counseling as Sessions 12-13 and 24-25 for the abusers group and as sessions 12-13 and 23-24 for the victims group. This should clear the schedule enough to allow the counselors to schedule these sessions during two one-week periods.

Additional couples counseling may need to be done, but will be done as part of the individual counseling, on an "as needed" basis.

Couples counseling will likely deal mostly with:

- Assessment of indicators of coming violence
- How to use a time out to defuse a situation
- Control issues between members of a couple
- Communications
- How to break away from the cycle of violence
- Fair fighting rules
- How to build a healthy relationship.

It is impossible to create a manual for this, as it really has to come from the counselors and the couples.

Personal Notebooks or folders

If both counsellors and participants feel it is safe to do so, participants may be provided with a small notebook or binder which will be theirs alone and which they will use throughout the program. They can write notes in this notebook, record information specific to their own situation, and carry out specific assignments.

As many people are not comfortable with writing, the use of these notebooks needs to be carefully handled so that the clients do not see them as some thing that will be "turned in" or will in any way affect their success in the program. They are just tools to help the client remember and a place to record personal thoughts.

The notebooks can be left at the counseling office if participants do not want to take them home, but they are the property of the individual participant and will be shared only as desired.

They can be kept in a locked file drawer and provided by the counselor upon request from the owner of the notebook.

At the end of the program, the notebook could be destroyed by the owner or retained as a "tool" to indicate a change of life. Or, at the completion of the program, the participant could destroy any "negative" parts of the notebook, keeping the positive parts to show that they now understand the cycle of violence and are ready to move forward in their relationships with their spouses, their children, and others.

What is the content of the sessions in the Victim's group and their order?

Some of the sessions are very similar or identical to those of the group for abusers, but offered in a slightly different order. For example, knowing more about the different types of abuse, ways to communicate, understanding conflict, jealousy, sex role stereotyping, the grief and loss process and the means to achieve a healthy relationship can be beneficial for both partners.

As it is possible that an individual may join the group after the sessions started, the counselor can decide to repeat some sessions (ex: staying safe), change their order or skip some of sessions to adjust to the group's needs and dynamics.

What happens after a person completes the sessions for Abusers?

The person will spend 2 to 4 hours in individual exit interviews and concluding counseling. Then the person will appear again before the Court for sentencing. The Court can ask the opinion of the counselor as to how the person did in the group sessions as well as during individual counseling.

What happens after a person completes the sessions for Victims?

Depending on needs, a person can spend 2 to 4 hours on individual exit interviews and concluding counseling.

Intake Protocol

Who can be accepted in the program for abusers?

A man or a woman that:

- Has no previous offence wherein over one year imprisonment was imposed.
- Has been charged with common assault as defined by section 265 of the *Criminal Code*.

  > Section 265.1 states: **1)** A person commits an assault when (a) without the consent of another person, he applies force intentionally to that other person, directly or indirectly; (b) he attempts or threatens, by an act or a gesture, to apply force to another person, if he has, or causes that other person to believe upon reasonable grounds that he has, present ability to effect his purpose; or (c) while openly wearing or carrying a weapon or an imitation thereof, he accosts or impedes another person or begs.

- Has caused minimal harm to the victim.
- Has pleaded guilty before a Justice of the Peace or the Court upon first appearance.
- Has expressed genuine remorse and acceptance of responsibility for the violence, a need for help and a willingness to participate.
- Has been recommended by the RCMP and the Prosecutor.
- The counselor considers acceptable.
- Has been referred to the program by the Court.

The input of the victim as to whether the program may be of assistance needs to be obtained.

This protocol was negotiated taking into account the reality about spousal abuse in Rankin Inlet, after a period of community consultation and once the initial program concept was developed. The protocol was signed by Justice Canada, representing the Crown, the commanding officer of the RCMP for Nunavut and the Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre.

Topics of sessions for Abuser's Group

Topics	Session	Details	Handouts /Videos	Page #
Group rules What is spousal abuse?	1	Group rules Definition of spousal abuse Triggers Intro to Time Outs	Video: Abusive Relationships	21
Knowing yourself	2	Warning signs and lines Safety plan review	2.1, 2.2 2.3	29
Kinds of spousal abuse and forms of behaviour	3	Kinds of spousal abuse and impact on victims • Physical abuse • Emotional, verbal and spiritual abuse • Financial and sexual abuse Analysis of past behaviours	Video: "One Hit Leads to Another" 3.1 RR#1 Rules 1-5	36
Understanding violence	4	Excuses and truths Cycle of violence	4.1 Video: "Time to Change" 4.2	44
	5	Abusive behaviour, power and control Breaking the cycle of violence (Survivors share experiences)	5.1 5.2	51
Anger control	6	Stressors Signs of coming violence (indicators)	Video: "Summer in the Life of Louisa"	55
	7	Dealing with stressful events How to use a "time out"	7.1 RR#2 Rules 6-10	60
	8	Elders' session: Input from Elders.		65
Changing beliefs and behaviour	9	Equality and balance: An Elder's perspective on equality and balance in relationships	9.1 RR#3 Rules 11-16	67
Communications	10	Understanding communications Communications skills (If time runs out, this session can run over into Session 12.)		71
	11	Expressing feelings		79
	12	Couples counselling (individual sessions)		81

	13	Couples counselling (individual sessions)		82
Conflict	14	Beliefs and sources		83
	15	Fair fighting		85
Jealousy	16	Causes of jealousy Insecurity and trust	RR#4 Rules 17-21	88
	17	A couples perspective on jealousy		93
Sex role stereotyping	18	Characteristics and roles		95
	19	Dominance in a relationship	19.1	97
	20	Sexual beliefs		100
Self-talk	21	Positive and negative self-talk	21.1	103
Journey to health through grief and loss	22	Family dynamics Types of losses	22.1	107
	23	Grieving tasks: accepting and feeling, denying Grieving tasks: adjusting and relocating, moving on		112
	24 & 25	Couples counselling (individual sessions)		118
Healthy relationships	26	What to do to have a healthy relationship	RR#5 Rules 22-25	119
	27	Healthy relationships; an elderly couple's perspective		122
Toward the future	28	Planning for the future; Elders' perspectives, expectations		124
Closure	29	Maintaining the gains; planning for the future		125
Optional units		Why a Victim Stays		128
Handouts		List of Handouts		132

Typical Agenda for Sessions

Set-ups for Sessions:

- For most sessions, you will need a flipchart and markers, so check to see that you have a good supply of working markers. In many cases, you will be putting the chart up on the wall, so make sure there is masking tape or grey foam mounting tabs so you can put the chart up.

- In several sessions, you'll be showing a video. This is marked in the manual in the beginning of the session description.

First session:

- Open session and take attendance (5 minutes)
- Counselors and members of the group introduce themselves and share expectations of participation in the program (10 minutes)
- Agreement on group rules
- Check-in (15 minutes)
- Agenda for the session (5 minutes)
- Explain program goals, principles, provide details on number, time, place of sessions, Discuss Elder counselors and outside resources who will be involved in some sessions (10 minutes)
- Activities: agreement on group rules and definition of spousal abuse
- Development of a safety plan
- Check-out and remind clients to complete their safety plan to discuss at the next session if they have not already done so in individual counselling sessions (15 minutes)

* Break at a convenient time (10 minutes)

Middle sessions:

- Open session, take attendance and remind of group rules (5 minutes)
- Check-in (10 minutes)
- Agenda for the session (5 minutes)
- Topics and discussions
- Activity(ies)
- Check-out and remind of safety plan (10 minutes)

* Break at a convenient time (10 minutes)

Last session:

- Open session, take attendance and remind of group rules (5 minutes)
- Check-in (15 minutes)
- Agenda for the session (5 minutes)
- Activity: maintaining your gains
- Closing remarks by counselors and Elders' committee members
- Check-out and remind of safety plan (15 minutes)

* Break at a convenient time (10 minutes)

Session 1

Purpose:

To agree on rules that will allow the group to work well and know what to expect.

How to do the activity:

- Write these rules on a flipchart (These are rules often used in groups of this type).
- Explain and discuss each rule with the group.
- Ask people if they wish to add rules.
- Reach an agreement on the rules people want.
- List rules agreed upon by the group on a new chart and hang it up so everyone can see it. Keep this flipchart on a wall for all sessions so it can be referred to when needed.

Keep to yourself what happens during sessions.
(Talking about what you learn is okay, talking about who and what is not OK.)

Talk about your own actions.
(Not about other people's actions)

Don't interrupt when another person is talking, listen to what a person is saying.

Treat each other with respect
(Even when you don't agree with what a person is saying....)

Speak for yourself
(Use "I")

Don't put people down
(Bad language makes people seem worthless)

When you talk about your partner use her first name
(Not "she" or "the wife", or a negative term.)

Be honest
(With yourself and each other)

Be sober and free from drugs
(If you have been drinking or have taken drugs you will be told to leave)

Be on time for sessions

Attend all sessions

Smoke and drinks only during breaks

Purpose:

To understand that spousal abuse is any behaviour used to gain or maintain control and power over another person.

How to do the activity:

- Ask each person what he thinks "spousal abuse" really is.
- List each definition on a flipchart.

- Write on another flipchart the following definition (comprises all the elements of spousal abuse):

Spousal abuse is any verbal or physical act intended to harm, injure or inflict pain on another person in order to establish dominance and control over that person.

Spousal abuse comes in many forms and comes from both men and women against their partners.

Go over this definition and explain each element of it.

Discuss examples if these have been brought forth.

Many people can't define "spousal abuse" as a whole, but will provide examples of it.

- Accept these and put them on the chart as you will work them into your discussion later.
- Go over the definition given by each person in order to see how his perception of spousal abuse is different or similar to what it really is.

Introductory video:
Show the video "Abusive Relationships" * as an introduction to the subject.

Discussion:
Ask the participants to tell you what examples of abuse they saw in the video. List these on a flip chart, and keep for use in Session 3. Leave space (a second column) to add additional material in that session.

Stress that abuse is a matter of choice, that:

"You choose to abuse, and you can choose NOT to abuse."

Emphasize that a person can decide not to be abusive and not to establish dominance and control over another person. Emphasize that abuse is not ingrained and that a person does not have to be abusive.

We will cover the different types of abuse in a session next week, but need to cover a few more urgent concepts first.

Purpose:

To understand what sets off ("triggers") an incident of abuse.

Exercise:

What "sets off" abuse?

Usually, there is something, maybe something done by either partner, or some outside influence, that sets off an incident of abuse. Sometimes this is said to "trigger" abuse. It's just a short way of saying "this starts off the event".

The word "trigger" can be used as either a term (noun) to describe something that starts off an event of violence, or as a verb to say that something (an event, a memory, an external stimulus, comment, behaviour) tends to start an episode of abuse.

If an abuser can identify this, he can watch for it and try to head off the incident by taking a time out, by mentally dealing with it, or by discussing it before anger builds up.

Ask the group to mention a few of their own "triggers" and list them on the flip chart. (You can start with the chart below and add to this, or start with an empty chart.)

Ask the question:

"How often is booze (or drugs) involved?

Draw their attention to the fact that some of the events that trigger abuse do so only when one or both partners are impaired, and that controlling drinking or drug use may diminish the number of times abuse occurs.

Possible "triggers" for abusive behaviour:

Impairment due to drinking or drugs; usually loss of self control.

Disagreement: spouse disagrees, argues, things get out of hand.

External stresses: something happens at work, and person comes home angry and takes anger out on spouse.

Feeling of lack of control or loss of dominance: if a person has been heavily "into" controlling all those in the family, any apparent loss of this control can trigger abuse.

Trigger	Possible results
Impairment due to alcohol or drugs	Loss of self control, inhibitions removed, situation gets violent
Disagreement	Spouse disagrees, argues, anger develops, and things get out of hand.
External stresses	Something happens at work or away from home; person comes home angry; takes anger out on spouse.
Perception of lack of control	If person has had total control, loss of this control can trigger abuse.
Loss of dominance	Dominant person feels threat and reacts by fighting it.

Purpose:

To provide an introduction to using Time Outs.

Note to Counselor: Although you may have introduced the concept of the Time Out in the individual counselling sessions, it will be introduced again here. The concept is so vital that it is important to keep repeating information about it and its use.

You want the use of a Time Out to become second nature.

And, you want to make sure that all group members have exactly the same info about it, so when you refer to this, they have a common background.

More details will be supplied later in a longer session on Time Outs.

Using these notes, go over this information with the participants:

Ask the clients:

- In sports, what is a Time Out?

  You are looking for approximately this: "Something called by a player or coach to make everything stop while action can be taken."
- What is it used for?

  You're looking for: "To stop an activity before it develops into a problem and give the team time to think about strategies."
- How do you call "Time Out"?

  Listen for things like: "Stop everything", "Call a halt by saying, 'I want a Time Out' and then take a break."

Warn them: This sounds simple, but it might be difficult to do if you are getting angry.

They need to understand the following:

1. A Time Out is NOT a sign of weakness. It is a sign of strength, and rational thinking.
2. It is leadership by example, NOT leadership by controlling. (This is important to emphasize when there are control issues in your clients, and there always are!)
3. It can't be a surprise. If you have not told your partner about Time Outs, then you have to do that, tonight, not later. Your partner MUST understand what this is, and how important it is to your relationship. Do not discuss this with your partner while you are angry.
4. Nobody will tell you when to use this. You have to understand yourself well enough to know when to do this for yourself and your partner.
5. You have to know what to do in a Time Out, and you have to follow the rules. Otherwise, it will not work.

6. You have to lose the thought that a partner might take advantage of you if you don't respond aggressively to conflict. They can't – you won't be there until you cool off. That gives your partner time to cool off, too.

How to call a Time Out:

1. When you experience tension building, say, "I need a Time Out". Do this calmly, but firmly.
2. Tell your partner you will be back in about an hour.
3. Leave the house.
4. Walk or go someplace where you can calm down and think about what to do to avoid abusing.
5. Concentrate on getting control of your emotions, defining the problem that needs solving, and resolving to deal with it without fighting.
6. Do not do anything that raises your level of tension, like driving a car or playing contact sports or violent video games.
7. If you need to talk to someone, make sure it is someone who knows just what a Time Out is and what it is meant to do. This person should be someone you have discussed with the Counselor, a professional counselor, someone from your church, or even another member of your group. Don't just go to a relative or a friend.
8. If you need to do so, write down what approach you think you should take to deal with this without your anger getting out of control.
9. Take an hour.
10. When you've calmed down, either return or check with your partner to see if you both can agree to resume the discussion without anger.
11. Then go home.

Make sure the participants know that the group will be discussing Time Outs and how to use them, over and over, and that you will be coming back to this in another session, soon.

Homework:

Ask group members to:

- Think about what you have learned so far
- Review the safety plan you have already done
- Write out your safety plan (if you have not already done this)
- Bring safety plan to the next session.

Session 2

Purpose:

To increase the sensitivity to Warning Signs and "Lines" that must not be crossed.

Instructions to counselor:

Go over the following notes in detail. This is one of the most important things people will learn in the course. You can repeat this handout and material later in the course if you wish. Repetition helps. There are two handouts with this section.

What are warning signs?

Warning signs are behavioural, physiological or mental indicators that show you that you are about to express anger in an abusive and destructive way.

They show you that you are about to act out of anger, rather than good judgment. They indicate that anger is running the show. You are about to not be doing much thinking at all, and will have lost sight of the original problem. Problem solving has stopped, and you are about to attack your partner rather than the problem.

When you first see your warning signs you MUST stop, and call a time out.

How do you do this?

- You must know your own warning signs.
- The moment that tension starts to rise, start to watch for warning signs.
- If you don't recognize and respond to your warning signs, you will have difficulty using the time-out procedure. You will be much more likely to abuse because you did not call a time-out when it was needed.

There are 3 types of warning signs: (See Handout 2.1, Finding Your Warning Signs)

1. Behavioral Warning Signs: aggressive words and ugly behaviors that start as tension rises. (WHAT YOU DO)
2. Mental Warning Signs: thoughts that run through your mind as the tension rises (WHAT YOU THINK)

3. Physiological Warning Signs: changes that take place in your body when the tension level rises. (HOW YOUR BODY FEELS)

Ask clients to list some of their own behavioural warning signs, and list these on a flip chart.

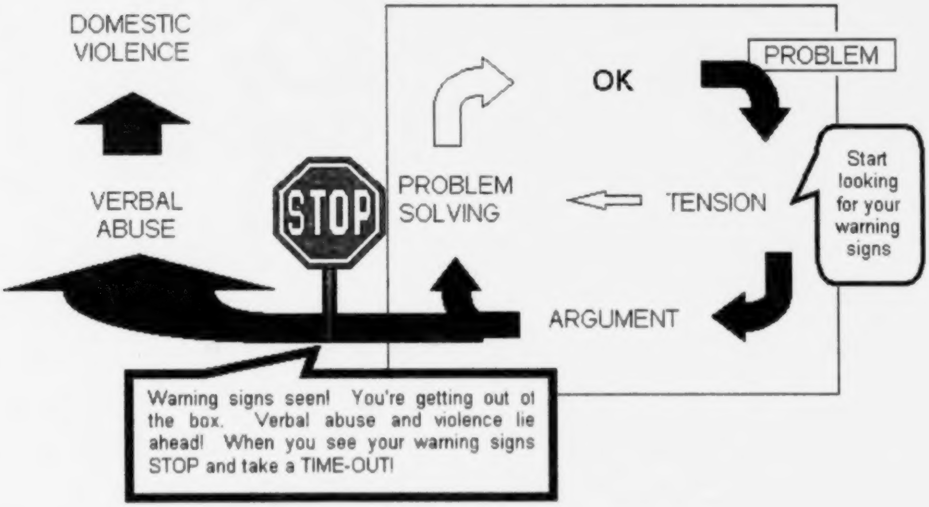
If they don't cover all those on the handout 2.1, then you read those out as well or probe to get more. It helps to look at these by what they do, what they think, and what they feel in their bodies.

Distribute Handout 2.1 (Finding Your Warning Signs) and ask participants to consider all and see which they know they experience. If they experience some that are not on the list (becoming unnaturally quiet or calm, starting to cry, muscle in face jumping), they should write their OWN signs into the list.

Make sure you cover the following:

- Warning signs vary greatly from person to person.
- You MUST identify and understand those warning signs that are meaningful to you.
- If you are having trouble identifying their warning signs, ask people who know you well, "How do you know when I'm getting really angry?" They will tell you!
- Warning signs are like reefs and rocks that are directly ahead of a ship. Failure to recognize them and avoid these reefs is reckless and foolish. Like the captain of a ship, you need to watch for your own personal "warning signs" that signal the need for a time-out.
- Or, warning signs are like huge stop signs that say: "STOP HERE! DANGER AHEAD! CHANGE COURSE NOW! You can't proceed down the road you're on. It will only end in further abuse and trauma.

Warning Signs and Time-Out


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VERBAL ABUSE
STOP
PROBLEM SOLVING
OK
PROBLEM
TENSION
Start looking for your warning signs
ARGUMENT
Warning signs seen! You're getting out of the box. Verbal abuse and violence lie ahead! When you see your warning signs STOP and take a TIME-OUT!

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. (www.continuingedcourses.net/index.php)

When do you start looking? Tension is a cue. Start watching yourself as soon as you feel tense.

Then what? Call a time-out and THINK. You have to get the tension down and think rationally rather than emotionally before you become abusive.

Instructions to Counselor:
There are two further useful ways to think about warning signs, as lines one does NOT want to cross.

Provide Handout 2.2 (Warning Signs and Lines), which provides useful diagrams to help with understanding.

Go over these notes in detail and make sure each participant understands the handouts. They can put the handouts in their notebooks.

The “I Don’t Care” Lines

Sometimes you fail in your efforts to call a time-out because you wait too long before calling it. You IGNORE your/their warning signs.

Anger grows, and at some point you no longer think or care about the results.

There are two critical points, which Dr. William Adams terms, the “I don’t care what I say” line, and the “I don’t care what I do” line.

As anger increases, the abuser crosses the “I don’t care what I say” line. It grows more and they cross the “I don’t care what I do” line.

- People say, “I lost control of myself.” This is likely not true. People don’t abuse because they “lose it”. They know exactly what they are saying/doing, but allow anger to grow to the point where they just don’t care. When they don’t care about either their partner or the consequences of their behaviour, there is nothing to stop the abuse from starting.
- You choose to abuse, and you can choose NOT to abuse.
- Crossing these “lines” is an indication of abuse, and should be as clearly understood as the warning signs.

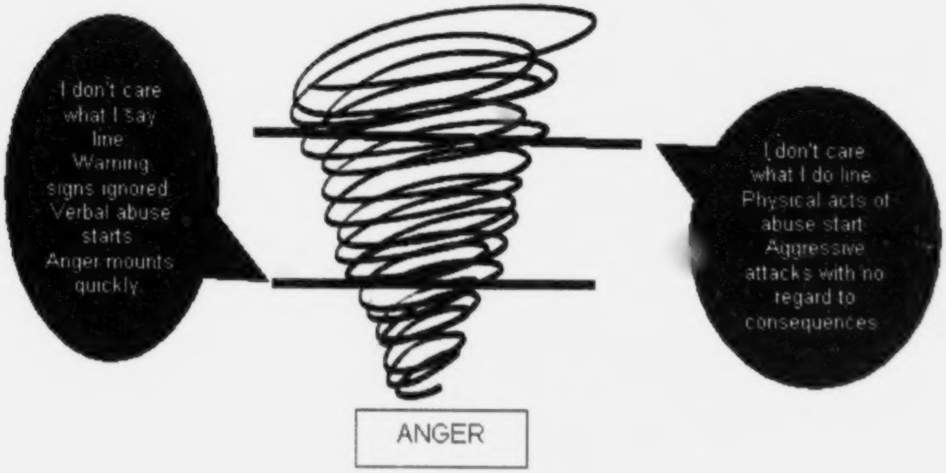
Crossing the “I don’t care what I say” line: You get verbally abusive. People call this “flipping out”, “losing it”, or “blowing my stack”.

- At this point, problem solving has stopped, and verbal abuse causes anger to build in a manner similar to the tornado below. It’s like flipping a match into gasoline. Anger and tension explode. Control vanishes.
- The longer you stay beyond the “I don’t care what I say” line before calling a time out, the harder it is to get back, and the less chance a time out will work.

Crossing the “I don’t care what I do” line: When you reach this line, the hitting starts.

- Emotional abuse continues and physical abuse takes over. Now you are really in the tornado. Getting out of the storm is difficult or impossible.

Ignoring warning signs is like running stop signs in heavy traffic. You might get away with running a couple, but eventually you will get into a wreck. Or, it's like skidooing on weak ice – you might get by for a while, but pretty soon you are in the water.


I don't care what I say line. Warning signs ignored. Verbal abuse starts. Anger mounts quickly.
I don't care what I do line. Physical acts of abuse start. Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences.
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. (www.continuingedcourses.net/index.php)

So, what can be done?

- Know your warning signs
- Monitor your warning signs
- Call a time out early, at the FIRST appearance of warning signs, while you are still thinking rationally.

Purpose:

To formalize a Safety Plan

Early in the individual counseling phase, the subject of warning signs and the need for a safety plan is introduced to each participant.

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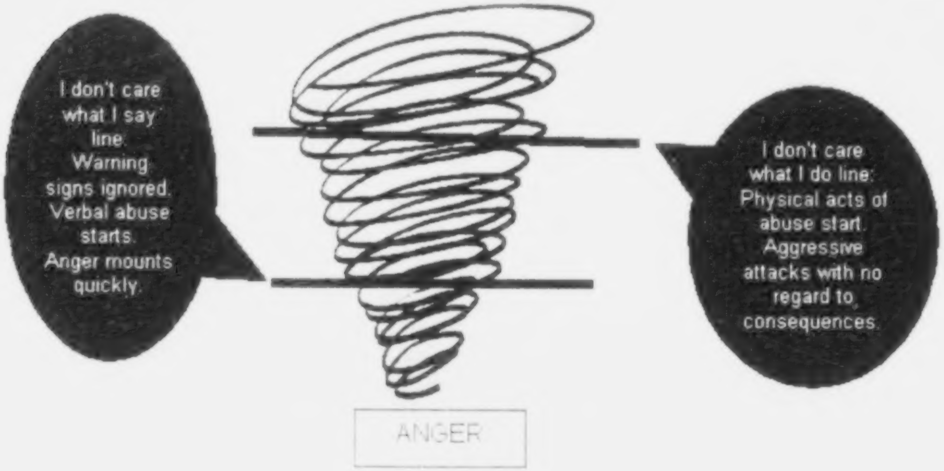
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To formalize a Safety Plan

Early in the individual counseling phase, the subject of warning signs and the need for a safety plan is introduced to each participant.

Provide Handout 2.3 (Basic Safety Plan for Abusers) to all participants.

During individual counseling, each person is asked to think out their warning signs and prepare a safety plan based on their own situation. For most, this will involve calling a Time Out and leaving the house until the emotions of both partners are under control. However, this works best when a person has thought it through clearly and has concrete plans. (More on Time Outs in Session 7, but be sure to cover it well enough in this session to be sure people know how to use this tool.)

The counselor should ask to see a written version of the participant's individual plan, and will urge the client to record it in his personal notebook.

Exercise:
Safety Plan

Discuss with the whole group the importance of the safety plan that each person may have established during individual counseling. As they learn more about themselves through the group sessions, they should review their plan to check if:

- The signals or warnings they have identified that lead them to be abusive are still correct (type of events, feelings, physical changes).
- That they know how to sense when things are getting out of hand with their partners.
- That the planned "time out" is detailed enough so they know where to go, what to do, whom to talk to.

Throughout the rest of the counselling program, ask the group to keep track of:

1. When they used their safety plan (date, how problem started, if either partner was impaired when the problem occurred).
2. If using the timeout or a safety plan helped them.
3. How it helped.
4. Was it long enough to allow both partners to cool down?

5. Did they do the right activity to help them calm down?
6. Did they manage to talk to their "support" people?
7. Was this talking helpful?

Also, if a participant has not noted his safety plan previously, should be asked to develop a written plan before the next session. Emphasize that it does not need to be long or involved, just a few words will be fine.

Session 3

Purpose:

To identity the different kinds of spousal abuse: physical, emotional and verbal, spiritual, financial, sexual. To look at how each kind of abuse can hurt a person.

How to do the activity:

- If you did not get to it in Session 1, then watch the video "Abusive Relationships". (Or, if you think it advisable and have enough time, could replay it again.)
- Post the list they made in Session 1, and review the types of abuse seen in the video OR, if you are showing it now, ask the group what kind of abuse they saw in the video and write their responses on a flipchart (in this film there are three kinds of abuse: physical, emotional and verbal).
- Have the group brainstorm about other kinds of abuse and write them on the flipchart. You can help them in identifying the 3 other kinds of abuse (spiritual, financial, sexual).
- For each kind of abuse, have the group brainstorm as to the impact of the abuse on a victim. Write the answers on the flipchart under each type of abuse.
- Discuss the answers of the group and compare with the impacts stated below.
  - ➢ Physical abuse: hurts the body.
  - ➢ Emotional and verbal abuse: hurts the emotions, makes a person feel worthless.
  - ➢ Spiritual abuse: causes hurt because it is an attack on one's religion, spiritual beliefs or culture. It affects the identity, and how a person feels about oneself.
  - ➢ Financial abuse: makes a person feel totally dependent on the one in control; makes a person feel small or unimportant.
  - ➢ Sexual abuse: demeans and humiliates a person, makes a person feel ashamed.

Exercise:

Analysis of past kinds of spousal abuse, forms of behaviour, and ways to change.

This exercise is to be done between this and the next two sessions, as the group learns more about the different kinds of abuse and forms of behaviour.

Provide "Defining Abuse" form, Handout 3.1. (Give each person 3 copies of form.)

Ask the group to write about specific past events which involved abuse. They can use their personal notebooks for this or can use the handout form and insert this in their notebooks. (Use "Defining Abuse" form.)

For each event, they should describe:

- The kind of abuse they used against their partners (physical, emotional, sexual....)
- The forms the abuse took (beatings, cursing, forced sex, etc.)
- The impact or effect they think it had on their partners and their families (kids, parents, etc.). Examples: Did it make their partners withdraw even more? Did it destroy communications? Did they see an increase in behaviour problems in their kids? Did it cause their parents to stop talking to them or to try to avoid them?
- They should also identify what they think they could have done to prevent the abusive behaviour.
- Now, ask them to make a few notes about how they could have changed their OWN behaviour in order to prevent the abuse. (Concentrate on what they could have done themselves, not what the partner should have done.)

Tell the group that what they will have written will be for their own use. Mention that during a later session, each person will be asked to share what he has learned from this exercise.

Purpose:

To understand what physical abuse is or can be:

- Any forceful or violent physical action.
- An action that can take various forms and that does not necessarily result in physical injury (the injury is not always visible but it is there).

Material:

VCR and TV, video "One Hit Leads to Another".

How to do the activity:

- Have the group brainstorm to identify forms of physical abuse and write them on a flipchart. They can use their "Defining Abuse" forms filled out as homework.
- Add on the flipchart other forms of physical abuse not mentioned by the group. Some of these could be:

Slapping	Scratching	Spanking	Biting
Wrestling	Poking	Choking	Grabbing
Restraining (gripping, tying a person, preventing a person from leaving the house, etc.)	Punching	Burning	Pulling hair
Pinching	Pushing	Kicking	
Throwing a person bodily or throwing things at a person	Refusing to get a person medical help	Forcing a person do something she does not want to do	Using objects or weapons against a person
Keeping a person from eating, sleeping or other basic needs.			

- Stress that how badly a person is injured is not what makes the action physically abusive.
- Watch the video "One Hit Leads to Another" (15 minutes). Have a group discussion. Some of the questions to address could be:
  - ➢ What led John to abuse Sylvia?
  - ➢ What kind of abuse did John use?
  - ➢ How did John's abusive behaviour toward Sylvia affect their children?

- How early can abusive behaviour start?

Exercise:

Follow-up on analysis of past abuse, forms of behaviour and ways to change (from earlier in session)

Provide additional copies of Handout 3.1 “Defining Abuse” if needed.

Remind the group to further consider the forms of abuse learned in this session in analyzing their own past behaviours in order to identify abusive behaviours and therefore understand themselves better.

Ask them to list three (or more) specific examples of abuse they have done.

They can list these in their notebooks, on flipcharts, or can continue to use the handout form “Defining Abuse”.

Purpose:

To understand what emotional and verbal abuse involve:

- Hurtful and angry words or looks that bring about fear and a feeling of worthlessness.

What spiritual abuse is:

- Comments or acts, which negate what a person is, including one’s culture and beliefs.

How to do the activity:

Emotional and verbal abuse

- Have the group brainstorm to identify forms of emotional and verbal abuse and write these on a flipchart.

- Add other forms of emotional and verbal abuse not mentioned by the group. These could be:

Insulting	Harassing	Criticizing	Making cruel comments
Threatening to punch, hit, kick, slap, hurt or act like it will be done	Shaming or embarrassing a person in private or public, by making remarks about them or calling them names	Putting-down a person or the person's family or friends	Making unfair comments

IMPORTANT: When physical abuse decreases, emotional abuse often increases. This can be less obvious to outsiders, but terribly powerful, and just as harmful as physical abuse. People should be aware of this.

Spiritual abuse:

- Have the group brainstorm to identify forms of spiritual abuse and write them on a flipchart.
- Add on the flipchart other forms of spiritual abuse not mentioned by the group. They could be:

Putting-down or making fun of a person's religious beliefs, race, language, culture, traditions	Pressuring a person to choose between family and beliefs or culture	Threatening a person because of her beliefs, traditions or culture	Preventing a person from practicing her religion, speaking her language, or learning more about her culture

Exercise:

Follow-up on personal analysis of past abuse, forms of behaviour and ways to change (from earlier in the session). Ask participants to add notes on personal examples of emotional, verbal and/or spiritual abuse to their notebooks for future discussion.

This will help them to better identify past abusive behaviours and therefore understand themselves better.

Tell them that in the next session, they will be asked to discuss some of the types of abuse they have personally been involved with, and will need to be able to describe some of the effects this may have on their partners and children, and how it has affected their relationships. They will need the notes in their notebooks or their "Defining Abuse" forms to do this.

Purpose:

To understand what is involved in financial abuse:

- Controlling the family money so a person must ask for everything or using money as a leverage to get something or to make a person do something.

And what sexual abuse is or can be:

- Any forced sexual action, and unwanted or disrespectful sexual touch.

How to do the activity:

Financial abuse

- Have the group brainstorm to identify forms of financial abuse and write them on a flipchart.
- Add on the flipchart other forms of financial abuse not mentioned by the group. They could be:

Making a person ask for any thing or every thing she wants or needs	Preventing a person from doing things with others because of the costs even if these are small	Making a person anxious about the capability of providing for basic needs (rent, food, clothes)
Taking all the money from the family bank account to gamble	Making fun of or putting-down a person because she does not have money	Requiring a person to do something she does not want to do in order to have money

Sexual abuse:

- Have the group brainstorm to identify forms of sexual abuse and write them on a flipchart.
- Add on the flipchart forms of sexual abuse not mentioned by the group. They could be:

Forcing sexual activity when the person says no, is asleep, drunk, high, cannot say no or is afraid to	Demanding sex and demanding sex after a violent incident	Physically attacking sexual parts and demanding and/or performing sexual acts that a person does not want to

Exercise:

Follow-up on analysis of past abuse, forms of behaviour and ways to change.

Ask the group members to write notes in their notebooks or use the "Defining Abuse" forms, listing examples of financial or sexual abuse they have done in the past. They can keep these private, but should have them for future sessions.

Purpose:

To talk about one's past abusive behaviours and their impact on one's partner and family in order to better understand oneself and how to change.

How to do the activity:

- Ask each person to talk about what he has learned about himself from the exercises so far (allow 30 minutes). When referring to specific past events involving abuse, help each person address the following questions:
  - ➢ Kind of abuse used against one's partner (physical, financial, sexual, etc.)?
  - ➢ Forms of abusive behaviour used (what actions – beating, cursing, insulting?).
  - ➢ What seemed to cause, start, or "trigger" the behaviour?
  - ➢ Impact on partner and kids. (How did they act?)
  - ➢ Things he might have been able to do to prevent the abusive behaviour.

Handout:

Relationships Rules (RR)#1, Rules 1-5

Introduce this concept by telling the group that, luckily, people have worked out some rules for relationships that usually work to improve things. These have been defined by Psychology Today magazine, and posted on a website. Pass the handouts around.

You will be providing these as handouts, one at a time. Suggest that people take these home and put them on the refrigerator, and then discuss them, not only with their partner, but also with their children if they are old enough.

Read through the first handout, discussing the rules as you go. Ask for comments. At this point, participants may not be able to say much about these, but that should change. There are 25 rules, and you will provide them one section at a time, over several weeks.

If their partners are in the victims program, they will be getting these as well.

Session 4

Purpose 1:

To review types and forms of abuse and identify these in a video.

Materials:

VCR, TV and video "Time to Change".

Ask participants to look for these factors in the following video, and to try to identify them as they watch it.

Watch the video "Time to Change" (26 minutes). Follow this with a group discussion.

- Ask group members to tell you what kinds of abuse they observed in the film.
- What form did the abuse take?
- Could they identify "triggers" for the abuse?
- Could they see warning signs?

Some of the questions to address could be:

- John's initial reaction during the intake interview: denying the problem, making excuses, blaming Sylvia.
- John's steps toward change: admitting the abusive behaviour, stopping the denial, taking responsibility, understanding his feelings, being in control of his feelings, changing the ways he sees himself in the relationship, realizing the impact of abusive behaviour on children.
- John's use of tools in the changing process: learning to listen, taking a time out before the feelings become unmanageable, talking to other men facing the same situation.

Purpose 2:

To learn about excuses for abusive behaviour and how these are used.

How to do the activity:

- Explain what an excuse is. An excuse is a false reason put forth for behaviour that justifies that behaviour in the mind of the person presenting this reason.
- Write on a flipchart one of the excuses listed below. Ask the group if anyone has said or thought this in the past.
- Continue to do this for all the excuses.
    - Excuse: Alcohol (or drugs) causes a person to beat another person.
    - Truth: Alcohol or drugs are not in themselves the cause of violence. The alcohol just loosens a person to a point where the person can act on the violent thoughts, which existed before the person got drunk. Drinking allows a person not to take responsibility for an action and blame the "booze". Different drugs affect people in different ways, and can cause aggression.

    - Excuse: A person who is beaten deserves it; she "asked for it".
    - Truth: No person deserves to be beaten, no matter what kind of person she is. Saying that she caused the violence or asked for it is an excuse to avoid taking responsibility for the violent act.

    - Excuse: Abuse is usually the result of an argument that got out of hand.
    - Truth: An argument that ends in abuse is a power struggle an abuser is determined to win. To call it an argument that somehow got out of hand only justifies violence and bullying.

    - Excuse: Since a person who is abused doesn't leave, it's not that bad.
    - Truth: Often, a person who is abused hopes that the abuser will change and that the violence will stop. For some persons, it's impossible to leave, as there is no place to go and no money to live on. Others fear losing their children. Others fear the anger of their families. Still others are afraid they will be injured or killed if they leave.

- Excuse: A person who is abused doesn't talk about it, so it's not that bad.
- Truth: A person may not talk about it for many reasons. The person thinks that she and the kids will be in more danger if someone knows about the abuse. The person can also feel ashamed or embarrassed. Sometimes, the person has come to believe that she is responsible for the use of violence. The person can think that the family or the community wishes that a family must be kept together.

- Excuse: A person is abusive because he has problems, has no job, or because his culture has been taken away.
- Truth: These are all excuses. Many people have problems and have also lost their culture and yet do not beat others. Remember the Holocaust and what it did to millions of Jewish people?

- Excuse: A person who is abusive is "Isumaluktuq" (incapable of thinking properly).
- Truth: This is another excuse. A person is capable of thinking and deciding not to be abusive. However, that person has not yet made that decision.

- Excuse: A person who beats a partner is not a danger to the community.
- Truth: An abusive person will seldom attack someone outside his relationship or family. In that sense such person is not a danger to the community. However, when a person beats another, people can try stopping the beating and in the process be attacked. Police officers have been hurt or killed trying to stop a violent act.

- Excuse: Extreme physical violence between partners is usually a rare occurrence.
- Truth: Ignoring a single beating is dangerous. Attacks usually become worse and worse or more frequent over time.

- Excuse: Women should be submissive to men, it is part of our culture.
- Truth: This may or may not have been true or partially true in the past within the Inuit culture, but is certainly not true now. Partners share equally in responsibilities for their partnership and for raising their children.

Are there other excuses you have used? Anyone want to add to this list?

"Relationship Rules" (RR)#1, handed out in Session 3.

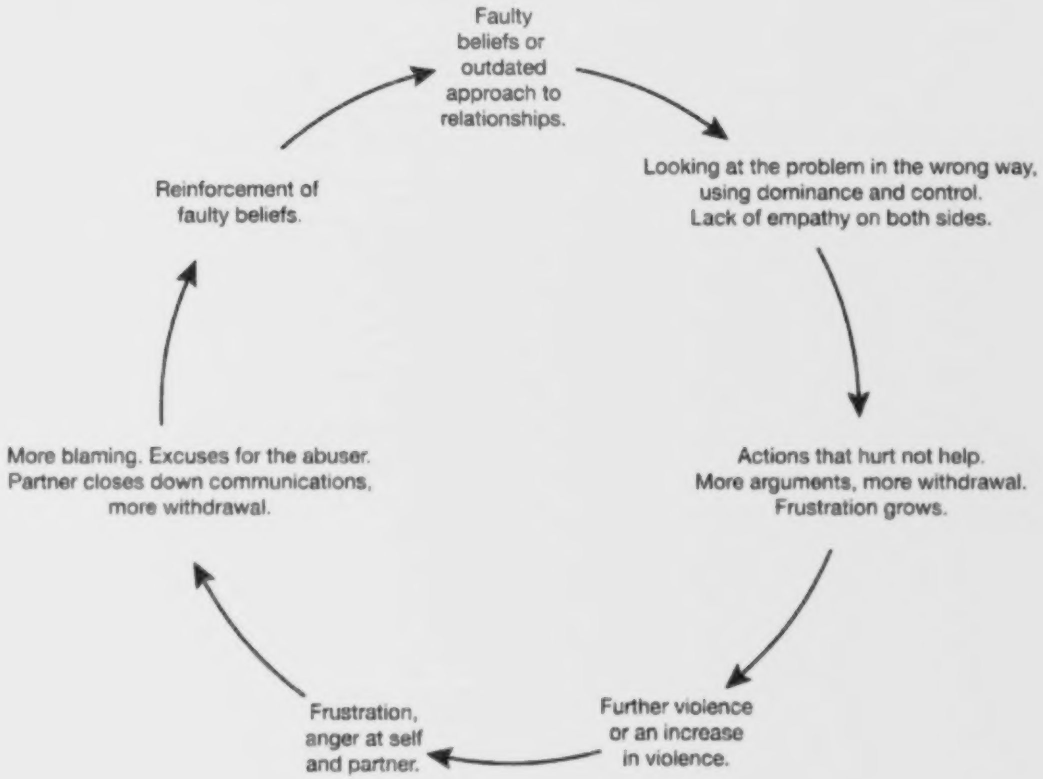
Ask what they felt about these, and how they were received at home.

Don't supply the second one yet. It's important that the first one stay up in their homes for a couple weeks, to give them time to discuss this with their families.

Try to encourage discussion of these rules. Much of what the abusers hear is negative and "don't do" type material. This takes the opposite approach, and tells them "Do THIS!"

Purpose:
To show how excuses can cause more violence.

How to do the activity:
Draw the Circle of Violence chart below on a flipchart and go over each phase of it to show how beliefs are part of the circle of violence.


Faulty beliefs or outdated approach to relationships.
Looking at the problem in the wrong way, using dominance and control. Lack of empathy on both sides.
Actions that hurt not help. More arguments, more withdrawal. Frustration grows.
Further violence or an increase in violence.
Frustration, anger at self and partner.
More blaming. Excuses for the abuser. Partner closes down communications, more withdrawal.
Reinforcement of faulty beliefs.

Circle of Violence

*Deborah Sinclair, Understanding Wife Assault: A Training Manual for Counselors and Advocates, Publications Ontario, Toronto, 1985

Provide handout of this diagram, Handout 4.1, Circle of Violence.

Purpose:

To show how the cycle of violence works (it goes in circles and repeats itself).

How to do the activity:

- Draw The "Cycle of Violence" diagram (Handout 4.2) on a flipchart and explain the three phases of violence: tension building, violence and apology or "honeymoon" phase. Explain that there can sometimes be a denial phase after the violence.

- ➢ Tension building: the abusive person is building stress and tension, calling names, accusing the other person of all sorts of things, slamming doors, yelling, making threats, criticizing. The other person tries to calm down the abusive person, and do everything right in the hope that it will go away, but it does not work so she becomes quiet. Tension builds even more.
- ➢ Violence: abusive and violent behaviour is usually triggered by the way the abusive person is feeling and not by an act done by the other person.
- ➢ "Apologetic": the abusive person is loving, kind, affectionate, apologizes, promises it will never happen again, the victim feels guilty, hopes it will not happen again. This phase is sometimes called the "honeymoon" phase.
- ➢ Denial: can happen when the abusive person denies it, the family and the community act like nothing happened, people make excuses for the abusive person, blame the victim. It does not encourage a change in the relationship.

- Stress that over a period of time, the violence usually gets worse and the apology phase gets shorter and shorter, while the tension building and violent phases get longer and longer.
- Ask the group how they see themselves in the cycle, are the "apologetic" times shorter than they were, is the violence increasing, and do they experience a denial phase?

Can use:

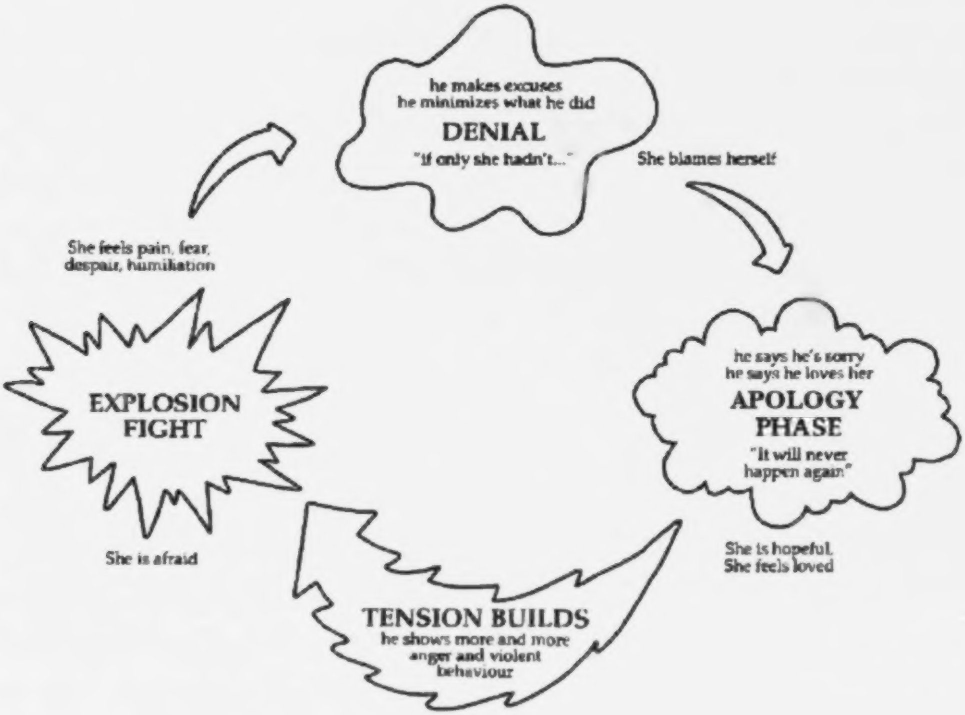
What happens to YOU in:

- The tension-building phase?
- The violent episode phase?
- The apologetic phase?
- Have you experienced the denial phase?

How do they intend to get away from this cycle? (May want to ask them to make notes about this in their notebooks.)

Communications are the key, there must be better, and less emotional, communications to deal with stresses and to break the cycle.

Distribute Handout 4.2 to all participants.


he makes excuses
he minimizes what he did
DENIAL
"If only she hadn't..."
She blames herself
he says he's sorry
he says he loves her
APOLOGY PHASE
"It will never happen again"
She is hopeful.
She feels loved
TENSION BUILDS
he shows more and more anger and violent behaviour
She is afraid
EXPLOSION FIGHT
She feels pain, fear, despair, humiliation

The cycle can cover a long or short period of time

The violence usually gets worse

The apology or "honeymoon" phase, will eventually disappear

Session 5

Purpose:

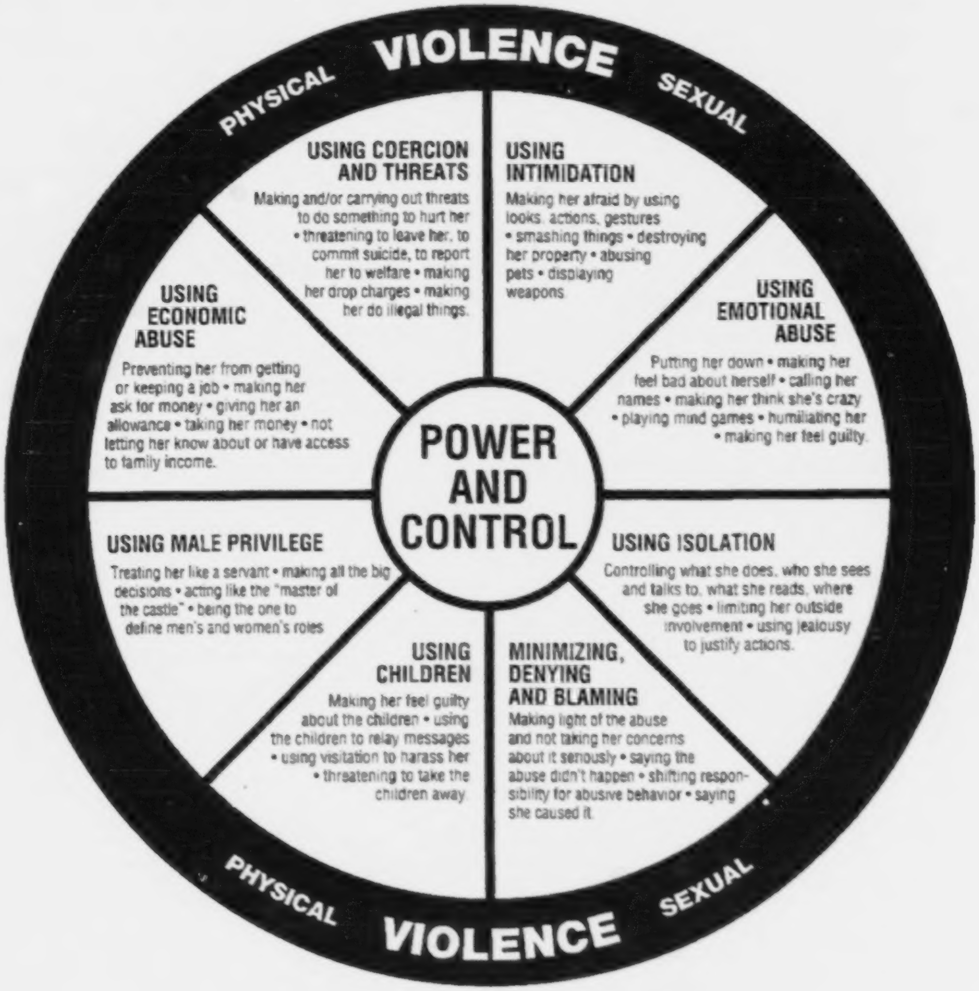
To understand that abusive behaviour is often used to control other people.

How to do the activity:

- Hang the copy of handout 5.1 (Power and Control Wheel) on the wall. (Keep it up for all other sessions as you will often refer to it).
- Give each person a copy of handout 5.1
- Explain the wheel:
  - Each section of the wheel shows different abusive behaviours to control or gain power.
  - All sections of the wheel have the same size because all forms of abuse are equally damaging. Not one of them is less damaging.
  - "Power And Control" is in the centre because it reflects the fact that abusive behaviour comes from the person's need to be powerful and controlling.
  - "Physical VIOLENCE Sexual" is at the rim of the wheel and strengthens the other forms of abuse described in each section of the wheel.
  - Abusive behaviour is like a wheel: it has neither beginning nor end. One part leads to another, and abusive behaviour can crush a person's spirit.
- Read the text in each section of the wheel.
- Using the behaviours mentioned in each section of the wheel:

1. Ask each person to identify the ones he has or has had and if he considers himself controlling.
2. Discuss and correct any comment tending to blame the behaviour on one's partner or on a particular situation.
3. Stress how honesty about oneself is essential to change and that denial and lies will bring them back to the cycle of violence (handout 4.2).

Power and Control Wheel



USING COERCION AND THREATS

Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her • threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges • making her do illegal things.

USING INTIMIDATION

Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures • smashing things • destroying her property • abusing pets • displaying weapons.

USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Putting her down • making her feel bad about herself • calling her names • making her think she's crazy • playing mind games • humiliating her • making her feel guilty.

USING ISOLATION

Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING

Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused it.

USING CHILDREN

Making her feel guilty about the children • using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass her • threatening to take the children away.

USING MALE PRIVILEGE

Treating her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

Minnesota Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806

Purpose:

To show that it's possible to break the cycle of violence.

A person from the community who broke away from the cycle of violence will share his experience with the group.

How to do the activity:

- Before the session, meet the resource person (such a person must have been identified and briefed as to your expectations and as to his role before the group sessions started) and provide some background information on how the group is doing.
- In order to assist this person, you can provide him with a list of questions that he could address with the group. (Or, you can ask these questions so he does not have to constantly refer to a written list.) Be sure to go over the questions with the resource person beforehand, preferably prior to his arrival at the session.
- The resource person takes about 10 minutes to tell his story to the group. Follow this with a guided discussion.
- Examples of questions you can use to guide the resource person:
  - When did the abusive behaviour start and how long did it last? (months, years)
  - Does he know what originally triggered the abusive behaviour and why did it last? (power and control?)
  - Did the violence get worse with time?
  - What were his regular excuses for violence?
  - What was the impact of his abusive behaviour on his kids?
  - What triggered the behavioural change to end the violence? (Participation in a support program? Spending time in jail? Breakdown of a relationship? Talking to Elders or family members? Support of community members?)
  - What does he do NOW when tension builds?
  - How does he think a healthy relationship can be achieved?
  - How does he feel now?

- Make sure the resource person is present at the beginning of the session and introduce him to the group. Being present at the beginning of the session could help the person have an idea of the group's dynamics.
- The group can ask questions as the resource person talks about his experience or you can delay the questions to the end of the presentation. Based on your knowledge of group dynamics and the preference of the resource person, you choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Session 6

Purpose:

To learn about one's stressors (individual events or thoughts that add stress to one's life).

How to do the activity:

Explain that a person can experience many stressors or stressful events and that what is stressful for one person will not necessarily be stressful for another. As stressful events that are not dealt with can lead to violence, it's important to understand what is stressful for oneself.

Ask each person to think of events that are stressful for him as an individual and to write them down. Allow 10 minutes. Ask each person to list the stressful events he has identified, write them on a flipchart and ask him to explain why they are stressful for him.

Add to the flipchart examples of stressful events not mentioned by the group. They could be:

Death of a spouse	Disciplinary action at work
Trouble with superiors at work	Financial problems, debts or gambling (oneself or partner)
Trouble with other people at work	Serious sickness or injury
Divorce or marital separation	Serious health problem of close family member
Death of close friend or family member	Sexual difficulties
Marriage or marital reconciliation	Moving to different neighbourhood or town
Changes in hours or working conditions	Child in trouble at school or with the law
Minor law violation (traffic tickets, disturbing the peace, etc.)	Change in number of family get-togethers
Pregnancy (or partner's pregnancy)	Change in sleeping habits
Quarrel with neighbours	Major change in type of amount of recreation
Involvement in a fight outside the house	Separation from a partner due to work or travel
Increase in number of arguments with a partner	Partner beginning or ending work
Increase in arguments or problems with other family members (in-laws, children)	Poor fitness report or evaluation

Overbearing in-laws	Children in home under age 3
Arrest or charge for something serious	New baby
Problems with alcohol or drugs (oneself or partner)	Not being able to get cigarettes when I have run out.

Have the group discuss each stressful event to see if it is stressful for them and why.

Using the complete list of stressful events, have each person identify three or four that they personally consider most stressful. They should record these in their notebooks.

Activity:

View the video, “Summer in the Life of Louisa”.

Discussion:

Using the flip chart, ask the participants to:

1) Identify the types or forms of abuse seen in this video.
2) Identify some of the “excuses” used to justify the abuse.
3) Try to identify some of the “stressors” that affect both Louisa and her partner.

Record these on the flip chart and encourage discussion of what could have been done differently.

Purpose:

To identify what happens before violence and the warning signs to look for.

How to do the activity:

Example of build-up towards violence.

Explain that abusive behaviour often does not result from one thing; it’s an accumulation of different things. As things happen, nothing is done, anger builds, and eventually there is abuse.

Before the session, make up a story that shows the build-up before violence. Read it slowly to the group. Here is an example of a story illustrating the build-up before violence:

- "A man wants to leave early to go hunting for the day, his wife is on the sofa listening to the radio.
- There is no breakfast, he's looking for his boots but can't find them, he wants some food for the day but there's none. He is getting angry. Nothing is going his way.
- He yells at his wife to help find his boots and to start breakfast but she doesn't move.
- He yells that she is lazy and no good. She says that he didn't ask her to buy food and she didn't touch his boots, so it's not her fault.
- The radio is loud, the baby is crying, she tells him that for once he could help. He loses control and slaps her."

Ask the group what things the abusive person could have done before becoming violent. Write all the things mentioned on a flipchart.

Signs before violence?

Ask people to think about the times they were violent and list their answers on different flipcharts:

- How their body felt at the time? (physical feelings)
  - ➢ It could have been tension in the neck, sweating, heart pounding, stomach in knots, clenching fists, etc.
- What were their feelings? (emotional feelings)
  - ➢ They could have been frustration, confusion, embarrassment, shame, fear, hurt, hate, anger, rage, etc.
- What were they thinking?
  - ➢ I am no good, she is no good, she is pushing me around, she is only doing this to bug me, I will teach her a lesson, etc.

- What did they do?
  - ➢ It could have been not talking, pacing, name-calling, slamming doors, hitting and breaking things, etc.

Review:

Warning Signs and Time Outs. (From Session 2)

Do a quick review of how to assess your warning signs and how to call a Time Out.

Note to Counselor: Might be better not to leave this one hanging, follow up with a retelling of the story, sentence by sentence, and ask participants to stop you at several points with ideas as to what they could do to prevent this from developing into an abuse situation.

A man wants to leave early to go hunting for the day, his wife is listening to the radio.

TRY THIS: PLAN: Make sure he has told her his plans the day before, collected his gear and bought food for the trip (or asked his wife if she could get some), and asked her if she would mind cooking breakfast. Make sure she knows this is a hunting trip to obtain food for the family.

There is no breakfast, he's looking for his boots but can't find them, he wants some food for the day but there's none. He is getting angry. Nothing is going his way.

TRY THIS: Sit down, collect his thoughts, and ask her if she's seen his boots. Ask if there's some food (name items wanted) he could take for the trip. Use a TIME OUT.

He yells at his wife to help find his boots and to start breakfast but she doesn't move.

TRY THIS: Don't yell. Start breakfast yourself, and ask her if she wants any. This should defuse the situation. OR: Use a TIME OUT.

He yells that she is lazy and no good. She says that he didn't ask her to buy food and she didn't touch his boots, so it's not her fault.

TRY THIS: No yelling. Apologize for not asking and see if there is anything that could substitute. Or, delay departure until the store opens and he can buy food. Call a TIME OUT, go to store and get food.

The radio is loud, the baby is crying, she tells him that for once he could help. He loses control and slaps her."

TRY THIS: Eat breakfast, sharing with the baby if possible, and ask if there is some reason she does not want him to go out hunting that day.

The approach in the beginning, with some advance planning, should defuse this situation. If you do everything possible to be kind, understanding, and helpful, and she is still surly or angry, then there are additional problems to deal with. If a Time Out doesn't work, then get your stuff together and go hunting, but DO NOT slap her around.

Note to Counselor: If you don't really get through this don't worry; it will be covered in additional sessions.

Session 7

Purpose:

To find ways to deal with stressful events.

How to do the activity:

Explain that failing to deal with repetitive stressful events can make someone mask them with alcohol or drugs or adapt to them, not take any action and continue the cycle of violence.

Discuss the importance, after having recognized that an event is having stressful effects, of finding ways to deal with it. This can be done by:

- Taking responsibility for dealing with the stress -- avoid shifting the responsibility on someone else, as it doesn't help.
- Looking for ways to change the situation by getting more information.
- Being patient as changes can take a while.
- Talking to people to put things in perspective. Ask: Is this stressor really serious or just a temporary glitch?
- Talking to people to clarify things and better understand what is happening.
- Keeping the event in context, trying not to overreact or dramatize the situation.
- Never try to hide from stress, as it will only get worse.

Give the group 5 minutes to think about a recent stressful event.

Ask:

What was the most stressful recent event for you? (These don't have to be events in the home, they can be at work, or in a competition, etc.)

- How did you deal with this stress? (Directed at the person who offers answer.)
- Have the group talk about how they would have dealt with such an event.
- Correct any inappropriate answers (ex: use of alcohol, etc.).

Use the ways to deal with stress mentioned above to show other more appropriate ways to deal with the events.

Repeat this exercise a few times so the group can see that a person can face a variety of stressful events and deal with them in a lot of different ways.

IMPORTANT: hiding what you do to a person doesn't make the problem go away.

Not dealing with stress can contribute to a build-up of tension leading to more violence.

TRY THIS: When you feel like you are getting stressed out, PUT YOUR HANDS IN YOUR POCKETS. You can't hit this way, and it will remind you of your resolution to avoid violence. Then go ahead with plans for a Time Out, etc.

Handout:
Relationship Rules (RR)#2, Rules 6 - 10.
Ask for comments. What do they think about sharing these with their kids?

Purpose:
To learn more about Time Outs and show how this can be used to avoid violence.

How to do the activity:
Through individual counseling, each person should have already learned about how to use a time out and should have made a time out or safety plan. This tool is essential to avoiding violence, so we'll spend more time on it at this point.

Explain what a time out is (even though you have explained it before). It's like walking away from potential violence, taking a break in order to avoid violence.

It's like a stop sign. It implies leaving the situation in which the conflict is occurring, getting away from one's partner until both settle down.

A Time Out takes at least one hour.

Describe the various steps of a time out:

- Recognize the events and signs that could lead to violence and learning what to do if a situation is going badly. If a person is not paying attention to his signs, no time out will ever take place.
- Stop whatever you are doing.
- Tell your partner that you need a time out to cool down and sort things out.
- Remove yourself from the situation. Leave the house. Physically go somewhere else.
- Go where you can think, somewhere free of alcohol and drugs. If possible, talk to someone, a friend, an Elder, a member of the family, a preacher, or another person in the group. If this is not possible, go somewhere quiet.
- Do something physical, like walking, exercising, playing some sports (try to avoid highly competitive sports).
- Take deep breaths, relax, try to understand what happened, what triggered the anger. Tell yourself to let it go, stop focusing on what made you angry. If you are driving, stop. Using a skidoo, a boat, an ATV or a truck is not a good idea as you are in no mood for its safe use.

Explain how important it is to tell a partner what a Time Out is (but tell her when things are calm, not during a fight), so she will understand you are doing this to help avoid violence. A time out will not resolve the problem you are having with a partner. It is a tool to help you avoid violence. If the partner is in the victim's program, the time out will have been introduced there.

At first, it will be difficult to take a time out but that this will become easier with time. The difficulties can come from a person's personality or habits. The person:

- Wants the final word.
- Wants to finish the argument now, to get it over with.
- Doesn't want to lose.
- Doesn't want to take the time to think it over.
- Doesn't take the time to see the signs or to feel what's happening.

Ask each participant: What kind of time out will you do? Where will you go? Who will you see? Who will you avoid seeing? What kind of activities will you do?

- Write each person's answers under his name on a flipchart.
- Ask the group to correct any inappropriate suggestions and explain why.
- Ask each to copy his plans into his notebook if he has not already done so.

Exercise:

Review Safety Plans

Ask each person to review his time out or safety plan during or after this session.

He should look at the signals or warnings listed in his plan and make sure they correspond to what he has learned about himself in the preceding sessions and decide if the time out plan he made is adequate. If not, he should revise it.

Bonus idea:

Time Outs work well with kids, too.

If kids are getting too wild, too rough, or bullying one of their group, a Time Out for everybody can work wonders and can keep you in control of the situation without bringing anger into it.

Just split them up, send each to a different part of the house or different chair, and insist on a time out of one minute per year of age (age 6 gets 6 minutes). Then, let them up, but repeat the time out if the inappropriate behaviour continues. No anger, no emotion about it, just insist.

Just be sure you do not use this technique out of anger.

The card (Handout 7.1) below can be copied and handed out to all participants if they want one. (We suggest translating this card.)

TIME OUT CARD

Your *warning signs* mean, "I need a time out." Leave for a minimum of one hour, then return. If you will be away longer, call partner and advise.

No alcohol, no drugs, no driving, no weapons.

Walk, breath deeply, and self-talk (self-calming, decide what you will say to deal with the problem without anger).

Check your own warning signs before returning. If you are ok, return home or call partner to see how she is feeling. If she is ok, return home. If she's not, ask if she wants a further time out.

When you return, check in, let partner know you are back.
If all is ok, resume discussion like adults.

If it escalates, take another time out.

Session 8

Purpose:

To allow constructive input from Elders at this point in the program.

In the Rankin Inlet Spousal Abuse Counseling Program, the wisdom and skills of the Elders are valued and deeply appreciated.

The Elders who work with this program are not formally trained as counselors, but have life skills and philosophies that make their input valuable to the participants. By the time they work in the program structure, the Elders have participated in several workshops that are designed to help them understand the principles of the program. The Counselors also have interviewed them and determined that they are in favour of equality in relationships, and that they are not of the opinion that a woman is the property of a man.

Communication with the Elders within this program fosters communication with and among the group members and provides a chance for group members to bond with and learn from Elders they may not have known well previously. These bonds extend beyond the time and confines of the program and the Elders offer their help on an ongoing basis, beneficial on a long-term basis. They encourage the clients to keep visiting the Elders after they are finished with the program, advising them that they are always available if they need someone to talk to about any concerns.

The content of this session will depend on how the previous seven sessions have gone, and on the assessment of the group by the counselor. Since this session falls into the section of the program on “Anger Control”, the Elders will be told this, but no attempt made to confine their input to only the control of emotions.

Elders teach by telling their life stories and by making examples of situations they have seen or lived themselves. Many of the people who end up in this program have lost contact with the Elders, and being exposed to them in the context of a program that is helping the clients establishes a special bonding that is very important to both clients and to the Elders as well. It is a special synergy that appears to have developed out of this program, not entirely understandable or describable, but certainly welcome.

The main benefit of the exposure to Elders is that the clients see that they are not alone, that others have had some of the same problems and that it is possible to change and work through problems to the benefit of themselves, their partners, and their families.

Procedure:

This session will be moderated by the Counselor to some extent, but in many cases it is more effective for the Counselor to step back and let the Elders take over, even leaving the room to allow communication to flow naturally. Since all Elders are briefed ahead of time, the Counselor has trust and confidence in their ability to not contravene the principles of the program.

The Counselor sets everything up, introduces the topic and the Elder(s), and then withdraws to the background or leaves the room, but stays within reach should there be questions or need of their input.

At the end of the session, the Counselor returns, asks a few questions to determine if there is any follow-up needed, and with the clients, thanks the Elder(s) for their assistance.

Session 9

Purpose:

To learn both partners can be equal, that power can be shared.

How to do the activity:

Hang the copy of handout 9.1 that is on the flipchart (keep it for all other sessions as you will probably often refer to it).

Give each person a copy of Handout 9.1 (Equality Wheel)

Explain the wheel:

- Different sections show different behaviours. They have in common the idea of an equal place for each other.
- All sections of the wheel are the same size. This is because all aspects of a healthy relationship are equally important.
- "Equality" is in the centre. It reflects people's need to be equal in a relationship, to share control with his/her partner.
- "Non-Violence" is at the rim of the wheel and strengthens the other forms of behaviours described in each section of the wheel.
- Non-violence is like a wheel: it has neither beginning nor end.

Read the text in each section of the wheel.

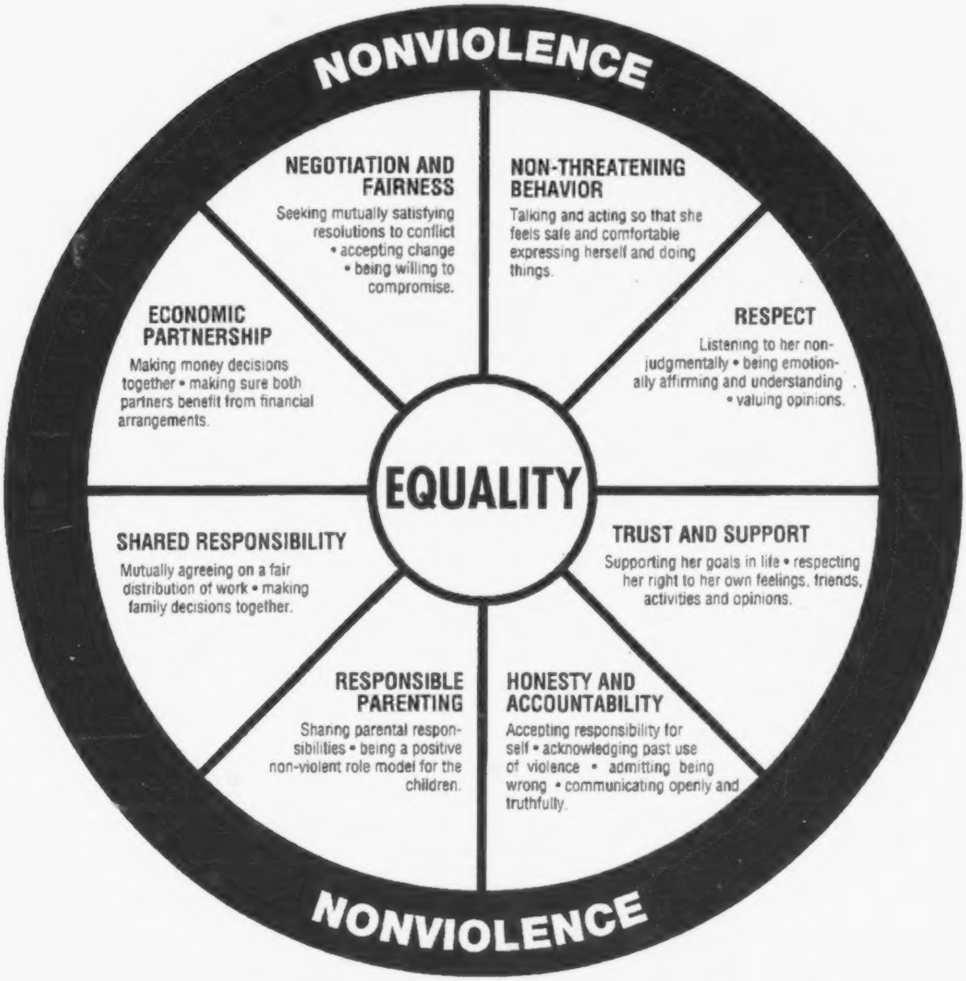
Using the behaviours mentioned in each section of the wheel, ask people to identify which one of them he has experienced or has displayed.

Ask if he considers his partner an equal with him. Be alert for denial or lack of honesty from individuals in the group, and question this if it occurs. Praise honesty in assessment of themselves.

Ask each person to talk about the things he could change to achieve equality in his relationship and how he would do it.

Ask them to record this in their notebooks.

Equality Wheel


NONVIOLENCE
NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS
Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict • accepting change • being willing to compromise.
NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR
Talking and acting so that she feels safe and comfortable expressing herself and doing things.
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP
Making money decisions together • making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.
RESPECT
Listening to her non-judgmentally • being emotionally affirming and understanding • valuing opinions.
EQUALITY
SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work • making family decisions together.
TRUST AND SUPPORT
Supporting her goals in life • respecting her right to her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions.
RESPONSIBLE PARENTING
Sharing parental responsibilities • being a positive non-violent role model for the children.
HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
Accepting responsibility for self • acknowledging past use of violence • admitting being wrong • communicating openly and truthfully.
NONVIOLENCE

Minnesota Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806

Purpose:

To show how equality and balance was achieved in the old days. An Elder from the community will share his experience with the group.

How to do the activity:

Before the session, meet with the Elder (Make sure this person has been identified and briefed as to his role and your expectations before the group sessions started) and provide some background information on how the group is doing. In order to assist this Elder, go over a list of questions that he could address with the group. If he is more comfortable with a guided discussion in which you ask the questions, then do it that way. If any member of the group does not understand Inuktitut, ensure that a translator is on hand to assist.

Examples of questions:

- What was your life like in the old days? Where did you live and travel? How many were in your family group?
- Was it difficult to be responsible for getting food to feed your family? Did your family experience hunger or starvation? How did you cope with this?
- What happened when there was bad weather for a long time?
- How did having children change your life?
- Did you experience serious illness or diseases in your family or group?
- What happened when someone died?
- How did you deal with jealousy between family members?
- How were quarrels or fights dealt with?
- What happened when a young couple argued a lot?
- How were extra-marital affairs handled in your group?
- Was your family ever moved to an unknown area? How did you handle this?
- What about life roles – in the past, everyone seemed to know exactly what they would do when they became adults, and were taught the skills they would need from childhood:
    - What was your mother's role, what did she do all day?

  - What about your father, what did he do?
- What is your opinion -- was life in the old days more or less stressful than today?
- Can you make some suggestions as to how people can deal with stressful events?
- How did you achieve respect, sharing responsibility, trust, and support with your partner?
- How did you settle disagreements with your partner in the old days?
- Did you ever experience events that could have led to violence with your partner? How did you avoid it?

Have the Elder present at the beginning of the session and introduce him to the group. Being present at the beginning of the session could help the Elder have an idea of the group's dynamics.

The group can ask questions as the Elder talks about his experience or at the end of the presentation. Choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Handout:
Relationship Rules (RR)#3, Rules 11 – 16.
Pass out the next "Relationship Rules" handout. Ask for comments on how this is working at home. Are they in general agreement with these ideas?

At this point, you should be seeing a change in attitude, more acceptance of this type of suggestion.

Session 10

Purpose:

Understanding communication.

How to do the activity:

Write the principles mentioned below on a flipchart. Go over each principle and explain how important it is to understand it in order to communicate effectively with someone and be sure that the message corresponds to one's intention.

Ask the group to talk about personal experiences that involved these principles. The examples below can help the group identify these experiences.

The message sent is not always the message received.

We usually think that if a person doesn't understand what we said it's that person's fault. In fact, the person who sends the message can do it in such a way that the message doesn't correspond to his/her intention and the person who receives it gets entirely the wrong message. Example:

Q. You're home late today!	Intention: Did you have a tough day?
A. I had to finish something for work, is that a problem?*	Reaction: she always wants to control me

It is impossible not to communicate. Body language speaks loudly.

Whatever we do, we communicate. Slamming a door, being silent, glaring at someone… all are communications. Non-verbal communication can lead to misunderstanding and a build-up of emotions. Just take the Inuit "yes" and "no" as a perfect example, and even these tiny movements can express far more than a simple "yes" or "no", just in the way they are done and the expression that accompanies the eyebrow or nose movement.

It is always better to clarify, by speaking, your feelings of displeasure, annoyance, frustration, or irritation rather than expressing them in body language. However, it is important to do this in a constructive way rather than just lashing out. If your concerns are spoken, there is less chance you will be misunderstood.

Every message has content and feeling.

If the content of the message is different from the feeling expressed, the person who receives the message will be confused.

Example: A mother lectures her son about how bad it is not to listen to a teacher or to skip school. At the same time she smiles at him and pats his head. The son will inevitably be confused as to what his mother really means. She's telling him it's not ok to skip school, but giving him clues that it IS ok or that she doesn't mean this.

*It's not so much the answer "I had to finish…", but the aggressive "Is that a problem?" that can cause anger to start. Even stopping, and making this into two different sentences, with a pause between, can help, and body language can speak volumes. Just insert an "I'm sorry" before "is that a problem" and most concerns would be met.

Non-verbal cues are more believable than verbal ones.
("Gestures speak louder than words.")

The inflection of the voice, body language, and nonverbal cues can give a totally different meaning to the content of a message.

Example: Saying to a partner who arrives home late after a meeting "You're so late!" could mean: "What happened to you, I was afraid for you" or "I have been waiting for you and you didn't care". Under certain circumstances and with certain body language, it can even seem to mean you thought she was with another man.

ke care not only how you say something, but how you look when you say it. The exchanged definitely matter; a hug could make all the difference.

And, you can sometimes head off the problem.

And, if you are the one that's late, there's a lot of difference if you come in and explain your lateness before your partner asks, especially if your being late has caused them to delay something they are doing.

Here's where a little apology, which doesn't cost you much, can save a lot of grief! How about: "Hey, I'm sorry I'm late, but Don's skidoo wouldn't start, and we had to tow it."

It is truly simple, just a matter of looking at things from the viewpoint of the other person as well as from your own viewpoint.

Session 10-11

Purpose:

To develop or improve your communication skills.

(Lack of these skills can definitely contribute to abusive behaviour).

How to do the activity:

Basic concept: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Generally, we learn this concept early in life, but many fail to understand or apply it.

Key to this is the concept of trying to look at things from the other person's point of view before acting. Then, to try to treat everyone as you would like to be treated. People crave respect, approval of others, friendship, and love. If you keep this constantly in mind, it can change the way you act to everyone. Mutual respect is very important in a relationship.

Discuss each skill listed below (expressing feelings will be dealt specifically in session 19).

Listening:

- Is there is a difference between hearing (receiving information) and listening (getting involved)? What is that difference? (Difference is understanding, seeing that point of view, having sympathy, and caring.)
- What would you expect from a best friend if you were talking to them about a personal problem? Full attention? Encouragement to give the whole story? Questions? Acknowledgment by the friend that he/she understands the problem? Caring rather than judging? Eye contact and response to what they say?
- Play the "rumour" game. Group sits in a circle. You have a sentence ready, written down. Whisper it to the person next to you and ask him to pass it on. Ask the last person to recite what he heard (usually the sentence said by the

first person is very different from the one the last person recites). You read out your sentence so they can see what the original was.

Example of a sentence that could be used: "James' wife went to the health centre to see if she was pregnant, she met Keith on the way."

Lesson learned: Rumours are easy to start, usually end up totally different, changing many times along the way. Talking to people one by one usually results in separation and lack of understanding of the original problem, and almost always in misunderstanding and untruths.

Validation: ("Checking up")

Validation means that a person shows that he does not necessarily agree with another person's opinion but still respects it. It's a way to check to see if you are understood or understanding or to open a door for the person to talk.

Example:

- STATEMENT: – "My boss was on my back all day! He checked everything I did! He doesn't trust me, and I could just kill him!"
- ANSWER 1 - "You are crazy to think about doing a thing like that!"
- ANSWER 2 - "It must be difficult to deal with a boss like that. Better not kill him though. Why don't we talk about what other things you could do?"

Sometimes it is as simple as: "You seem kind of quiet – is everything OK? Any way I can help?"

Positive expression: ("Good feelings")

This works both ways, and will also be covered in detail in the victims' counselling program.

When was the last time you said something nice to your partner?

Positive expressions between partners are very important, like affection and caring, praise and compliments, and expression of appreciation. Every person needs to feel appreciated, to be complimented and to receive affection. If you think that your partner knows how you feel so you don't have to say anything, you are dead wrong! This does not make the partner appreciated.

If it is sincere, praising, complimenting and showing one's appreciation will almost always lead a partner to respond with similar expressions.

Expression of negative feelings: ("Bad feelings")
It's not easy to express negative feelings but it's always better than not expressing them. Think about how you usually express negative feelings.

As you get angry, don't let the negative feeling get bigger than it needs to.

Focus on your partner's behaviour and what is upsetting you about that behaviour and NOT on her personality (Never say "You are stupid/it was a stupid thing to do!", but express how you feel: "I'm upset, because ...").

"Never, never, NEVER use "You always……" This will always increase the emotion and negative feelings on the part of the person to whom it is directed.

With children, you may find this helps: "We always love you, but we don't always like some of the things you do. You just can't keep hitting your little brother like this."

Counselor: Ask the group how they would express negative feelings.
Search for the following answers: don't hold on your feelings, focus on how the message is being sent and express how you feel: "I feel …because you…" or "I feel upset because…can we discuss this when we are calmer".

How to ask: (Making requests)

Each of us asks many things from each other every day. The way the request is made can convey authority and control, or it can convey cooperation, respect and love.

How do you request something from your partner?

TRY THIS:

- Be prompt (don't wait and become irritated), don't assume the partner knows what you want, and wait and wait, getting more upset. Ask before you get upset.
- If something has to be asked at the last minute, be polite: "Gosh, I seem to be behind on this and desperately need your help! Could you……?"
- Say "Please……" Maybe it is not part of the Inuit culture, but it's a useful custom that should be a part of all cultures.
- Use questions, not commands: "Would you mind if…..?" "Could I ask you to help me with……?" "If you have time, could you ……..?"
- Be specific about what you need. "I can't get this VCR to work – you're better at this than me, want to give it a try?"
- Avoid the use of "How come you…..?" "Why don't you……?" and the like as these lead to accusation and rebellion.
- Don't forget to be grateful! Say "Thank you!" and mean it.
- Use sincere positive feedback. "I never could do those repairs nearly as well as you can." "Hey, great meal!" "You look really nice today." "You should have heard what little Sam said today – I'm so proud of those kids!"
- Don't be insincere. It will always show.

Exercise: (Role-playing)

Set up some little scenarios and ask participants to pair off and figure out ways to ask kindly. Everyone gets a written note with their "scene", and has 3 minutes to figure it out. One person plays the male partner and the other the female. Female partner should respond as that person thinks she would. Ask each pair to go through their scene and then switch roles and take another scene.

- You really want to race in a skidoo race, but your family budget is tight and the entry fee is $50. You know if you just do this, there will be repercussions. How do you negotiate this?
- You would like to go to darts with the boys on Wed. night. Your wife doesn't have anything on Wed. night, but likes to go to a sewing circle on Thursday night. You have two small kids. How do you negotiate this?
- You get home from a long hunting trip and find your spouse has made a great supper, including a chocolate cake, and has delayed eating until you arrive. What do you do? What do you say?
- Hockey has returned to the world, Jordin's playing, and you want to watch the game. You know your wife usually has a group of friends in for cards on that night. You usually look after the kids while they play. What do you do?

Reality Check:

Afterwards, ask participants what they thought of the role-playing. Did it make things seem more "real" to them?

Did playing the role of the partner make them think about this from another point of view?

Session 11

Purpose:

Expressing Feelings

To help put feelings into words and to understand how to express them in order to reduce the build-up of negative emotions and conflict (it can be more difficult for men as generally they were socialized not to express feelings).

How to do the activity:

Putting feelings into words

Write each different type of feeling on a flipchart, or use the wall chart.

Choose one type of feeling, have each person think of a recent situation and match it with one of the words listed for that type. Have each person describe the situation and the feeling.

Do this exercise for as many types of feelings as possible.

Sad	**Happy**	**Scared**	**Confused**	**Hurt**	**Ashamed**	**Guilty**	**Angry**
Unhappy Lonely Depressed Helpless Powerless	Excited Upbeat Glad Joyful Content Relaxed Satisfied Peaceful Calm Confident	Fearful Anxious Frightened Worried Defensive Unsafe Nervous Timid Cautious	Unsure Puzzled Troubled Unsettled	Disappointed Distrustful In pain Suffering	Shameful Embarrassed Worthless Inadequate	Regretful Remorseful Apologetic	Furious Mad Annoyed Bitter Upset Hateful Resentful

Expressing feelings (20 minutes)

Discuss the following rules to express feelings:

- Always use “I” when expressing a feeling. Don’t use “you” as it could lead the other person to feel she is accused of something. Ex: “I feel angry” and not “You think I feel angry”.
- Express a feeling by a statement and not by a question.
- In order to avoid confusion, express a feeling using the present and in prompt language. Ex: “I feel depressed” and not “It depresses me when”.
- Don’t use “You make me….”, as in “You make me feel angry.”
- State how you feel and then ask your partner how she feels. Ex: “I feel great this morning, how do you feel?”

Identifying feelings and expressing them is not easy and needs practice. Stress to the group how important it is to practice this, AND to discuss it with their partners.

Session 12

COUPLES COUNSELING SESSION

At this point, two sessions on couples counselling (conjoint therapy) will be incorporated into the counselling program.

Individual sessions for couples will run about an hour per session.

If the sessions are for two or more couples, they will likely be longer, up to two hours.

This counselling may be done as individual couples with both counselors present, or as pairs of couples, or as a small group of couples. It may be done during the same week as group sessions (but at a different time from the groups) or may be done instead of group sessions for a week.

The decision on how to handle this must be left up to the counselors – if the group is large or problems are intense, it may make sense to suspend group sessions for a week and schedule all the couples' sessions into every available time slot. If holidays are approaching and the counselors are concerned about the stability of the group, it may make sense to offer couples counselling without suspending the group meetings. The important thing is that the Counselors feel free to deal with this based on their intuition and knowledge of the present group dynamics.

Session 13

COUPLES COUNSELING SESSIONS (Second of 2 sessions)

At this point, two sessions on couples counselling (conjoint therapy) will be incorporated into the counselling program.

Individual sessions for couples will run about an hour per session.

If the sessions are for two or more couples, they will likely be longer, up to two hours.

This counselling may be done as individual couples with both counselors present, or as pairs of couples, or as a small group of couples. It may be done during the same week as group sessions (but at a different time from the groups) or may be done instead of group sessions for a week.

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Session 14

Purpose:

To show that conflict is normal and is to be expected in a relationship and to deal with some of the beliefs about conflict.

How to do the activity:

Write the following statements on a flipchart. Have the group vote true or false to each statement, and discuss their answers.

Conflict means something is wrong with me or with my partner	False
Conflict is normal and predictable	True
Conflict comes from difference in perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and attitudes	True
Conflict is not good/bad/right/wrong - it “just is”	True
Conflicts occur because at least one person is “right” and one person is “wrong”	False
Conflicts provide an opportunity to learn and grow	True
Anger is a bad emotion	False
People always get hurt during a conflict	False
It’s okay to have a different opinion, as do others	True
All my emotions are okay	True
I have the right to my own opinion, as do others	True
My beliefs and perceptions about conflict do not influence how I deal with conflict	False
Each person is responsible for how he decides to deal with conflict	True
Changing patterns of behaviour can be done in a few weeks	False

Have the group brainstorm as to the main sources of conflicts between partners and write them on a flipchart. They could be:

- Time spent together and closeness (In a relationship with a friend, for example, you can more easily avoid the conflict as you don’t live with that person).
- Number of tasks that are done together.
- Number of decisions that must be made (financial priority, decisions regarding the children, etc.).
- The desire to influence a partner.

- Age and sex differences. There is a difference in the way men think and the way women think.
- Discussions that take place in the home where there are no moderating influences.
- The necessity to stay together: you cannot resign from your relationship.
- A high level of stressful events.
- Difference in culture and beliefs. There are cultural differences if you are in a cross-cultural marriage. In some cases the very thought processes are different; we process information differently. Full understanding may not happen, but it helps a lot to KNOW that there are differences.

Ask the group for other examples of conflicts. Then ask them to think for 5 minutes of ways they could deal with these. Discuss these different ways.

Session 15

Purpose:

To learn ways to handle arguments, sometimes called "fair fighting" rules.

How to do the activity:

Write on a flipchart the rules for fair fighting and discuss each rule:

- Fighting by mutual consent – "agree to fight"

  Don't insist on a fight at a time when you or your partner can't handle it. To have a fair fight, you and or partner have to be ready for it.
- Stick to the present; don't dig up the past.

  Don't dredge up past mistakes and faults and don't make statements for the future like: "you will never change".
- Stick to the subject

  Don't throw in every other problem that has no relation with the subject.
- Listen to what your partner has to say
- Use "I", not "you" or especially not "You always…."

  Don't talk about what you think your partner thinks or feels.
- Don't attack your partner

  Don't bring up things that you know your partner is sensitive to; and don't label your partner (alcoholic, stupid, insecure, etc.).
- Take time to try to work things out; compromise.

  Try to end the fight with a compromise that satisfies both partners. If you don't, it will recur. If necessary, take a time-out and come back to the discussion when you are calm.
- Don't try to win, ever!

  If one wins, the other loses and begins to build resentment about the relationship. It destroys rather than builds the relationship.
- Respect tears but don't let them be used to avoid a decision.

  It is a valid response to how a man or a woman feels. However, don't let crying sidetrack the discussion.
- NEVER use violence

Physical violence goes against all rules of fair fighting. Before you start, make a pact with yourself NOT to be violent. Take a time out if you feel your resolve slipping.

Write on a flipchart the words to use and the ones not to use in fair fighting.

"No" words – DON'T USE THESE	**"Yes" words – YOU CAN USE THESE**
"You never"	"I'm sorry"
"I told you so"	"Please help me"
"You always"	"I did wrong"
"I don't want to discuss it"	"Thank you"
"When will you *ever* learn?"	"I love you"
"How many times do I have to tell you?"	"I appreciate you"
"You always…."	"I respect you"

When there is conflict between you and your partner and a "fight" happens, the objective is to clear the air and express deep feelings in order to build a more unified life together.

Share a recent experience of conflict and describe how they handled them, and how they now feel they should have handled it.

Role-playing activities:
Counselor will set up a role-playing scenario and participants will take different parts and play this out.

How do you handle these conflicts?

Example: There's hockey practice twice a week. Two kids are in hockey, in different teams, so different practice times. The mother is the one who takes the kids 90% of the time. She feels the father needs to be involved.

Example: Parent teacher conferences are coming up. The mother has been to these on a regular basis, and the father has never gone. One child is having problems in school and is skipping school. Both parents know this, and know it will be discussed. The mother feels the father should attend the parent-teacher conference. The father doesn't want to go.

Example: Hockey tournament for kids. Your kids are playing. Unfortunately, you are a rabid hockey fan and good hockey player. And, you are super competitive. One kid is good, the other is not. You go to the game and end up overreacting, yelling at the "not so good" player and making a scene. Your spouse is upset and embarrassed and your child is crying.

Afterward, discuss what people learned about communication and reactions to what people say.

Session 16

Purpose:

To understand how jealousy undermines trust and feeds feelings of insecurity.

How to do the activity:

Explain what jealousy is. It's the suspicion that one's partner is unfaithful. It can also be the fear of being replaced or diminished in importance in the affection of one's partner. Jealousy is one of the leading causes of spousal abuse.

Mention the difference between jealousy and envy. Envy is a feeling of discontent aroused by another's better fortune (feeling anger that someone else has more money, better hunting equipment, or handles kids, parents, friends better, etc).

Explain that:

- Jealousy can be tied to low self-esteem: a person who has low self-esteem can fear interest his partner shows for another (it can go as far as being jealous of a partner's bond with a best friend or sibling).
- Jealousy can also be tied to insecurity. A person may have lacked a sense of security before the relationship. This may be due to a lack of bonds with friends and family members, or because of problems stemming from childhood neglect or abuse. The slightest incidents involving one's partner can be perceived as threatening to the relationship.

Talk about what jealousy does. Jealousy undermines trust and feeds the feelings of insecurity and fear. A jealous feeling usually isn't logical, and doesn't respond to reasoning. A jealous person usually doesn't readily accept explanations, and constantly seeks evidence of faithfulness. It's usually a fear that comes from one's own insecurity or lack of confidence.

Envy and jealousy can occur together, and this often happens when your partner seems to be flirting with an attractive rival. Since jealousy involves the loss of a relationship, it is usually more intense than envy. The following table may help. Discuss the differences between jealousy and envy.

Envy	Jealousy
Feelings of inferiority, worthlessness	Low self-esteem
Longing or wanting something	Fear of loss of something you have
Resentment of circumstances	Suspicion or anger about betrayal
Ill-will towards envied person plus guilt	Distrust
Disapproval of feelings	Sadness and loneliness
Motivation to improve or change one's own circumstances	Uncertainty
Desire to possess attractive qualities of another	Fear of losing an important person to another

Discuss the following with the group:

If you are the one exhibiting jealousy:

- Many people are faced with unwanted invitations or attention. Some people flirt without meaning to do so. Some people cope with these unwanted invitations by doing nothing, being passive. The only way to know what your partner is really feeling is to talk about it.
- If your partner is very attractive, do you want her to "ugly up" to allow you to be more secure? Probably not.
- Did you become blind to the opposite sex when you started the relationship? No. Why do you expect your partner to do it?
- If your partner has never been unfaithful, 90% of your jealousy comes from your own personal insecurity. Don't blame your partner for it. You can and should express to your partner your own feelings: I am afraid you will get to like him better than me if you see him too much, I get nervous when you talk to this guy, etc. Then listen to what she has to say.

- Have you ever said to your partner: "I trust you… but I don't". That kind of statement can give your partner the impression that you don't think she can make her own decisions or have control of her life.
- Possessiveness is a form of jealousy. A partner may constantly ask about a spouse's relationships with many people, or insist that the partner has no outside friends. He or she may constantly express suspicion that a partner is involved with others. The suspicious person doesn't feel vulnerable, but hurt, hurt by the fact that the spouse feels the need or right to have contact with another person (ex-partner, friend, family member, etc.). The possessive partner doesn't see the need for it and doesn't accept it. In that context, communicating and accepting differences are essential. Making an issue of it can work against the possessive person.
- Being involved in a relationship is taking the risk of being hurt, being vulnerable because of being intimate.

Ask each member of the group: Do you think your partner would make a decision in favour of your relationship or a decision to benefit himself alone? Then ask if he would make a decision in favour of the relationship or to benefit his partner. If either answer is "No", there is a need for both partners to talk and to try to resolve doubts or conflicts. Doubts enhance insecurity and affect trust, creating all sorts of consequences.

Ask each person: What is the percentage of problems that have occurred in your relationship that were related to jealousy? Ask each to describe events that made him jealous and to explain how he dealt with them in the past. Ask the person to describe how he would deal with them today. Would it be in the same way?

This question can also be reversed, asking each member of the group what percentage of their problems have their roots in a partner's jealousy? How did he deal with this in the past? How would he deal with this today?

If your partner is the one that is constantly jealous:

- You may not be able to change your partner, but there is a lot you can do to understand jealousy, and some things you can do to help reduce it.
- Ask yourself: Am I to blame? Are there real issues of emotional threat?
- Do you flirt with others? Do you often say, "I don't mean anything by it." Or "I was just having fun." Anytime someone uses "I don't mean anything by it.", there is a real reason for suspicion.
- Is a former partner still in your life, and do you flirt with this person? Many people have had a significant relationship prior to their marriage. These relationships should be dealt with maturely, by not bringing them up unless necessary (for example, when dealing with issues regarding children of that relationship). If you have not really let go of this person from the past, your spouse's jealousy may be rational and well-founded. There may be an emotional threat to your relationship. You need to terminate the past relationship NOW. Grow up, move on, love and invest in the here and now.
- Is an adulterous relationship with another a present threat to your relationship with your partner? The most severe cause of rational jealousy is adultery, and it always has consequences. Adultery can cripple a relationship because once trust is broken, it is slow to mend. Distrust may last for years or entirely destroy a relationship. If this is true in your relationship, you may need to make your schedule an open book and keep your spouse informed of your whereabouts at all times.
- Put a stop to all flirting, bury past relationships, and stop all adultery.

If in your heart, you feel there is no real reason for your partner to be jealous, then you may be involved in a situation of irrational jealousy. A common cause for irrational jealousy is childhood emotional neglect or abuse. If your spouse was abused, and especially if your spouse was sexually abused, you may find chronic mistrust, jealousy, and often addictions.

In the current situation that faces you, as an abuser (who has caused distrust) yourself, you can do little about this aspect of your spouse's life. You can encourage her to participate in the victims' program, as coping strategies are discussed there.

Do NOT try to deal with her past abuse problems yourself. There's already a lack of trust and this will make it worse.

Handout: Relationship Rules (RR)#4, Rules 17 – 21.

Pass out the next Relationship Rules handout. Probe for how the clients and their families feel about these. Do they make sense? Are they helpful?

Session 17

Purpose:

To show that feelings of jealousy can be overcome. A couple from the community will share their experience with the group.

How to do the activity:

Before the session, meet with the couple (such a couple should have been identified and briefed as to your expectations and as to their role before the group sessions started, or should have participated in the training workshops for those helping with the group) and provide some background information on how the group is doing. In order to assist the couple, you can provide them with a list of questions that they could address with the group, or can use these questions to guide their presentation.

This couple can be Elders, or can be younger people if that works out better. It's not essential that they be Elders.

Examples of questions:

- How did you find each other or get together in the first place?
- Where did you live? Under what circumstances – on the land, in town, etc.?
- For the woman: What was it like to move from your parents' place to another home?
- Was yours an "arranged marriage"? How did you feel about that at first? Later?
- We know that people in the past always had to obey the Elders. Do you know the reason for that? How did you feel about it?
- Were you ever jealous of each other?
- What kind of events brought on the feeling of jealousy?
- How did you work out these jealousy issues?
- How can these feelings of jealousy be overcome?
- Is faithfulness important in a relationship? Why?
- What about trust? Can you lose it easily? What can you do to regain trust?
- What would you recommend doing to deal with feelings of jealousy?

Have the Elders come at the beginning of the session and introduce them to the group. Being present at the beginning could help the couple understand the group's dynamics.

The group can ask questions as the Elders talk about their experience or at the end of the presentation. Choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Everyone has a right to a healthy relationship: "People don't have to be abusers or abused."

Session 18

Purpose:

To discuss men's and women's stereotypical characteristics and roles.

To show how believing in rigid and traditional roles of the sexes can lead to conflict in today's world.

How to do the activity:

List what you think are stereotypical characteristics and roles of men and women. Use one flipchart to list characteristics and roles of men and another to list those of women.

Expect something like:

- Characteristics of a man: tough, independent, and self-reliant.
- Stereotyped role of a man: main provider of food (by hunting and fishing), sole provider of income, and decision-maker for the family.
- Characteristics of a woman: tender, dependent and possessing nurturing skills to take care of the kids and meet the emotional needs of the family.
- Stereotyped role of a woman: get married, have kids and take care of them, sew, cook and clean.
- In the Inuit culture, these role stereotypes are hard to overcome or set aside. In the past, this was often true. Men had to hunt, and women were the ones who looked after the kids, cooked, and took care of the clothing. In the past, roles were rigid. It is easy to understand why there may be problems now. Many older people still retain these views of the roles of the sexes. But this is no longer true in today's world.
- Assigning rigid characteristics and roles to a partner can lead to conflict and abuse when the characteristics and roles change. Our very world is changing, and the roles that worked in the past are not as relevant today.

Ask for examples: Some of these might be....

- A man who sees himself as the only provider and feels threatened when his partner decides to sew and get paid for it, or gets a well-paid government job.
- A man who doesn't work and doesn't provide but still expects to be the decision-maker becomes abusive when his partner (who does work and gets a pretty good salary) doesn't spend the money as he wishes.

Stereotypical characteristics and roles also can define a relationship based on the tasks each partner is "supposed" to do: the men go hunting and fishing, the women stay home and clean the house.

When a partner hasn't done the task he/she is supposed to do (ex: the man didn't catch anything, the woman didn't clean the house), it's easy to blame and to compare who is doing more than the other, bringing on conflict. Ask the group to think of similar situations they have experienced or witnessed and talk about them.

See the equality wheel to show that an equal relationship is not based on tasks each partner has to do but on sharing them and being flexible in the way you consider roles. There's nothing wrong with a man helping cook supper, or with a woman helping care for a dog team.

Serving each other out of love rather than expectations due to sexual stereotypes or being harassed or forced. How much better the relationship could be if people thought about each other and did things because they wanted to make their partner happier or to surprise and please them.

Session 19

Purpose:

To help the group see how decisions are made in their relationships.

To learn how dominance in a relationship often leads to violence.

Time and material needed: One hour and 20 minutes – Handout 19.1, flipchart, marker and pencils

How to do the activity:

Explain how important it is for both partners to understand their roles in their relationship in order to understand the effect of changes.

Ask each participant how he sees his relationship as a couple:

- Do you make all the important decisions?
- Does your partner make the important decisions?
- Do you agree with the way this is working for you both?
- Do you make decisions together?
- Do you or your partner make decisions depending on the subject.

Have each person complete handout 19.1. Discuss how perception is similar or different from the reality.

Examples:

Losing dominance (control) can lead to resentment and violence. A person who has acted as head of the household or believes he has to be "in charge" can resort to abuse if he feels he is no longer in charge.

Delegating decisions unwillingly can also lead to violence. For example, a man who has asked his partner to handle their finances may resent it when he has to ask for money or is told that they can't afford to buy something that he wants.

Discuss the expectations and experiences or participants in the group: (the equality wheel, handout 15.1, could be useful during the exchange).

- Do you think you should have a dominant role in the relationship? Why?
- Do you feel pressured by family or community rules to behave in a certain way?
- Do you like the way roles are shared in your relationship? If not what would you change and how?
- Does your partner like the ways things are now?
- Have you ever discussed changes in respective roles with your partner?
- If you are assuming a dominant role, were there times when you felt you were losing this, and resorted to abuse to keep it?

Handout 19.1: Decision-making and dominance.

Make an X in the column that describes the way decisions are currently made in your relationship. Add other decisions if you wish.

Decisions	Almost always me	Shared equally	Almost always my partner
Where to live			
Whether my partner should work			
Whether I should work, or not			
What job my partner should take			
What job I should take			
Whether/when to have children			
Whether I can attend church and which church I attend			
How to handle finances			
What major purchases to make			

What to do for fun			
Who I can socialize with			
When to have sex			
How to discipline children			
What family activities to do			
Whether and when to go hunting/fishing, etc.			
When to visit relatives			

Session 20

Purpose:

To learn more about beliefs regarding sexuality and understand how they can cause problems in a relationship.

How to do the activity:

Explain that beliefs about sexuality can cause problems in a relationship. When things don't happen the way one thinks they should, a person can become anxious, frustrated, insecure, and jealous and could resort to abusive behaviour.

Write the following beliefs on a flipchart and show how each of them can create problems between partners:

- Sex is necessary to have a good relationship.
  - ➢ If partners have not been having sex for some time, the belief that it's necessary can create a cycle. They try even when both are not in the mood, and fail to have a satisfying sexual activity because of not really wanting to have sex in the first place. They blame each other for failing. This leads to more anxiety about failing the next time; they try again and the cycle repeats itself over and over.
- A person in love and sexually satisfied will never be sexually attracted to another person.
  - ➢ This is simply not true. Attraction is something a person cannot help. Acting on attraction is something a person can help. If a person believes that his partner should not be attracted to another, ever, he will be very vulnerable if his partner exhibits friendliness to someone else, even in a platonic way. He may feel insecure and threatened even by innocent jokes. He becomes jealous and may become aggressive because he believes that his partner has everything and has no right to even look at someone else.
- When partners are in love, they automatically know what each other wants.

  - This has proven not to be true. If partners don't talk about what they like and don't like, needs are not met, and one partner will often become frustrated, feeling he/she is not having a satisfying sex life.
- Men are always ready and willing to have sex or/and that any sexual activity has to be started by men.
  - A man who believes that he always has to want to have sex, or that he is the one that has the sole responsibility to initiate it, is establishing an impossible standard for himself, and depriving himself of much pleasure. Failing to meet that standard can, over time, affect his self-esteem and make him anxious and angry.
- Difficulty in "performing"
  - Men occasionally go through periods where they cannot "perform" as well as they would like. There may be mental or physical causes for this. It is important that neither member of the couple think this is his/her "fault", and that a medical opinion be obtained before this causes problems in their relationship. Again, being willing to discuss this with your partner is terribly important.
- When one's partner wants to have sex, the spouse should go along even if not really feeling like it at that moment.
  - Having sex when not really wanting to can create frustration, and can snowball into constantly wanting to avoid intimacy. This happens because the partner is doing something while not really wanting to do it, and this can lead to blaming one's partner.

Can you think of other beliefs that might cause problems in a relationship? Why do these beliefs create problems? Do you talk about sex and sexuality with your partner? How do you discuss it? Are your discussions always based on conflict over sex? Just talking about sex and sexuality in a positive way can help you understand each other and can help solve some problems in this area.

What happens regarding family planning in your relationship?

- Do you discuss this with your partner?
- Do you receive unwanted pressure from other members of your family?
- Do you feel like you have enough information on this subject?

In many cases, partners do not talk this out in advance of living together, nor after they begin having children. If they have different opinions as to how many children to have, whether to space them out, or how to do this, then serious conflicts can arise. It is extremely important to know what you and your partner believe and want to do regarding this most important part of any relationship. You MUST communicate about this.

Reality check:

How did you feel about discussing sex and sexuality in the group? Did it bother you to discuss this with a woman present? Do you feel it might be a little bit easier to discuss this with your partner, now?

Session 21

Purpose:

To introduce the idea of positive and negative self-talk and how purposely using positive self-talk can help.

Definitions:

Review these with the group.

- Beliefs: your subconscious attitude toward yourself, your partner, your family, and the world.
- Self-talk: what you are aware of saying to yourself
- Negative self-talk: statements to yourself that justify violence, control, or abuse, that shift the blame for your behaviour onto another, or that cause an increase in emotion and anger.
- Positive self-talk: statements to yourself that help you avoid violence, control or abuse, statements that accept the blame for your own behaviour, or statements that decrease emotion or anger in a situation.
- Feelings: state of mind or general emotional condition.
- Action: something you do or don't do, way you conduct yourself in a given situation.

You can control what you say to yourself, and if what you say to yourself is positive, it can help you control your emotions, and can defuse a situation that is rapidly going bad. You must know your warning signs, and you should start positive self-talk as early as possible when a conflict seems to be developing. The more you use positive self-talk, the easier it becomes to use it, and the easier it is to stop a situation from developing into violence.

Example:

Negative	Positive
Your partner works for a govt. dept, and calls to tell you she needs to have lunch with a co-worker to discuss an upcoming project.	Your partner works for a govt. dept, and calls to tell you she needs to have lunch with a co-worker to discuss an upcoming project.
Self-talk: She's got a thing for this guy. What's going on? Did I miss something? She *must* be involved with this guy. I've got to keep my eyes on her *all the time*. I better check up on her; I'll go by the restaurant and see what's going on. I'll let her see me so she knows she can't get away with this.	**Self-talk:** Gosh, she must have more responsibility in this job than I thought. Hey, maybe they are giving her more responsibility. We need for her to work, and she has to work with both men and women. If she has any responsibility, she has to be able to meet with whomever.
Beliefs: You just *can't trust women*. I should have *more power and control* over her. Otherwise, she might leave me, get out of control, sleep with other men, or do something else *I can't stand*.	**Beliefs:** I can't blame *all* women just because I had a bad experience with one. I married this one *because* I love and trust her. I can have power and control only over *myself*, not my partner. I've got all kinds of reasons to respect, love and trust her.
Feelings: fear, mistrust, anger, hurt, suspicion, jealousy	**Feelings:** trustful, secure, comfortable, happy, respective supportive, relaxed.
Actions: You show up at the restaurant to see who she's with. You ask questions after work that day. You keep checking up on her at work. You start physical abuse at home when she gets angry at you for asking so many questions.	**Actions:** You do *nothing*, go home, have lunch, and return to work. You welcome her home with gladness. If you ask about her project, it is from genuine caring and interest, not because you are checking up on her.

Unrealistic beliefs vs. realistic beliefs and positive self-talk.

Go through this list with the group, listing the unrealistic beliefs on one flip chart and asking the group to contribute positive beliefs or self-talk on another flip chart. Ask if any have been in this situation and urge them to write down important thoughts in their notebooks.

Group members should feel free to add other beliefs. Write them into the manual if they do.

Unrealistic or unhelpful beliefs	Positive beliefs or self-talk
My past experience makes me what I am. It decides my feelings and behaviour today.	What happened in the past can't be changed. I can be influenced by the past, but I CAN change my thoughts, feelings, and behaviour NOW.
My partner has to love and approve of all I do, all the time.	It's not possible to always please my partner, or to be approved of all the time. Sometimes my partner may love me but not like

	what I do. It'd be nice to always be liked and approved of by my partner, but I don't NEED to be.
My partner should obey me because I'm the man. If she doesn't, I have the right to punish her.	My partner is not perfect and might do some things I don't approve of, but I can't help that. I can't change her behaviour. Even thinking about punishing her can make me violent and may push me into abuse, so I'd better change my thoughts right now. I can tell her (or anyone) what they are doing that hurts me, but I don't have the right to punish them.
She should know what my needs are, and try to help me.	My partner isn't a mind reader. She can't know what my needs are, all the time. I need to communicate better. Even though I communicate my needs, sometimes she may not always meet them. And THAT'S OK.
I'm older so I must be right, I should not make mistakes.	No one is perfect. I would like to be best at what I do, but I don't need to be. Older doesn't automatically mean I'm right.

Handout: 21.1: Self-Talk

Exercise: Here's a scenario. Fill in the negative self-talk part with what you would have said to yourself in the past. Then fill in the positive column with what you think will work if you use positive self-talk. We've omitted the "beliefs" section to make this quicker to do.

Negative	Positive
Your partner leaves at 6 pm to go to the Northern. It closes at 7 pm, but by 8 she is still not home. She comes home at 8:30 PM, and says she ran into a friend from Iqaluit who was in town, and they went for a coffee.	Your partner leaves at 6 pm to go to the Northern. It closes at 7 pm, but by 8 she is still not home. She comes home at 8:30 PM, and says she ran into a friend from Iqaluit who was in town, and they went for a coffee.
Self-talk:	**Self-talk:**

Feelings:	**Feelings:**
Actions:	**Actions:**

Session 22

Purpose:

To show that one's family dynamics about loss and grief can affect one's future behaviour.

To learn that not going through a grieving process after a loss can lead to violence and abuse.

How to do the activity:

Write the following sentences on a flipchart. Keep the flipchart on a wall during the four sessions on grief and loss:

- "I cannot have my past back, I need to shape my present and future"
- "My healing is grieving from my pain of broken attachments".

Define "family dynamics": How a family acts or reacts to an event, characteristic actions or lack of actions, how all people in the family interact together.

Define loss: something that is taken away or disappears from one's life.

Define grief or grieving: emotional, physical and spiritual response to loss, a process that allows healing from the pain.

Explain that:

- The way a family reacts to a loss impacts all family members and affects their future behaviour.
- Many families do not deal well with loss, and some do not deal with it at all. A person who comes from a family where loss was not dealt with will probably react in the same way when having a family of his own, therefore perpetuating unresolved issues in his life.
- A person who has not dealt with loss or has not grieved after a loss stands a chance of having long-term effects due to unresolved issues.

This situation can easily lead a person to become depressed, anxious, angry, violent, abusive, resort to alcohol or drugs to escape thinking or to try having an illusion of happiness, etc.

Ask people to think for 5 minutes of a loss suffered when they were young.

This could be the death of a brother, a sister, a parent, a friend; it could be having been abused, moving to another community, etc. They should make some notes in their notebooks so they can tell the story.

Ask each person to tell of his experiences when this happened:

- How did other family members react to the loss?
- How did he deal with the loss?
- How does he feel about it today?

Think for a few minutes about a loss for which you did not grieve, for whatever reason, or grief you did not resolve, due to circumstances, denial, or being unable to face it.

Does anyone want to share this with the group? Take care with this, as it can lead into some very emotional situations. If you want, just ask people to write about this in their notebooks and discuss it in the next session or in individual sessions.

Few people realize that grieving is part of getting closure, getting on with life, and healing. It needs to be done.

Exercise:
Writing one's life story.

During the next two weeks, we'd like you to develop your life story.

Writing one's life story means writing about events, relationships and related feelings. If there is someone you lost, but feel you failed to grieve for, you can concentrate on this.

The life story you will write will be yours alone, and you will decide what to do with it (keep it, get rid of it, share it with someone, etc.). It does not have to be "turned in". We do want you to make the effort to do this, however, but we will not read it unless you want us to do so.

It might be easier to deal with this by separating your life into sections, perhaps:

- Childhood (first memories, family history, growing into a teenager)
- Teens
- Early adulthood (up to the time you were married or took a partner)
- Married life before children
- Life with kids
- Life today

Or, it may be easier to do this as a "lifeline".

Using the form (Handout 22.1 (Lifeline Form), group members can write in life events above and below a line. Tell them to put events they feel were "good" above the line, and those they believe were "bad" below the line. (Note to Counselors: this form has to be run out in "Landscape" orientation, so there is space to write.)

Purpose:
To learn about the different types of losses.

How to do the activity:
Write on a flipchart the different types of losses and explain each of them.

- **Loss of things**: losing things like a house, a boat, a skidoo or a gun.

- **Loss of dreams and hope**: losing a dream, losing a hope, being betrayed by someone, losing self-image, losing part of one's culture, losing childhood, being shunned by the church.
- **Illness/aging loss**: losing the ability to be independent. A person can suffer such loss when becoming dependent on others (needing help for basic needs due to a handicap), on objects (ex: cane, hearing aid), suffering from an illness that will not get better (ex: diabetes, arthritis), losing senses due to aging (ex: see, hear properly), losing the capability of having children, losing interest in sex.
- **Career or role loss**: following a job promotion, changes in responsibilities that make someone lose freedom associated with having less responsibilities, losing one's role in one's community or organization by being asked to resign or be fired from a job, changes that occur due to one being charged with a crime or the like.
- **Loss of routine or security** (loss of systems that provide security, comfort and routine): "empty nest syndrome" for parents who see their children leaving home to go to school or to enter into a relationship, changing of work schedule, of shopping system, of family rules, changes of hunting and trapping rules for Inuit people.
- **Loss of a relationship**: losing a relationship through death, divorce, separation, abortion or miscarriage, adoption (even if customary adoption is agreed upon, the biological parent often has a hard time dealing with the loss of a child), death of a pet, moving to a new community, losing the spiritual relation with the land due to lack of money to go on the land.

Ask the group to add any other losses they can think of. Discuss the losses added by the group.

Life stories: Ask how the group is getting along with doing their life stories.

Answer any questions they may have about this and offer individual counselling if you perceive that someone is having real emotional problems with this exercise. If they need new forms, provide copies of Handout 22.1 again.

Session 23

Purpose:

To learn more about grieving through understanding the tasks of accepting reality and feeling the pain, and the more common reasons for denial.

How to do the activity:

View this session as an opportunity for group members to share stories and feelings. Therefore, during the explanations on grieving tasks, the counselor should allow for interruption and pause in order for the group to think of past experiences and talk about them.

The grieving process is unpredictable. Draw on a flipchart a horizontal line interrupted by spirals that go up and down the line to show that a grieving process has interruptions and setbacks.

Grief comes in stages or tasks. List on a flipchart the four grieving tasks:

- ➢ accepting reality
- ➢ feeling the pain,
- ➢ adjusting to the environment
- ➢ emotionally relocating and moving on with life

Talk about the first two tasks.

- Accepting the reality of the loss by realizing and accepting that:
    - ➢ Loss is permanent: all future plans or hopes are gone and plans have to be altered (if it is the loss of a job, the dream of getting that job is gone, if it is the loss of a person following divorce or death, the relationship with that person is gone).
    - ➢ Reunion is impossible: no reunion will ever occur again.
    - ➢ One's life will never be the same: life has been permanently changed and the loss has left a permanent mark.

- Most people try not to face the reality of loss because it's too painful, they deny the loss, they want things to be the way they were before the loss. The denial can relate to:
    - The facts of a loss. Examples: refusing the use of aids like hearing aids or canes (denial of getting older or having an illness), continuing to refer to a person as being alive (denial of the loss of a loved one).
    - Minimizing the meaning of a loss to make it less significant than it really is. Examples: "the lost job was lousy anyway", "my relationship with that person (who died) was not that important".
    - The irreversibility of a loss by refusing to face the fact that the loss is final. Examples: saying a person will come back or that it's not over forever.

Feeling the pain.

The natural response to pain is to refuse it. No one wants to place a hand on a hot stove because they know it will hurt. Moreover, people are influenced by society's approach to pain: an unnecessary experience that should be blocked.

Most people try not to feel the pain. They will:

- Refuse to re-enter life: avoid certain tasks, people, places or things that remind them of a loss.
- Adopt an addictive behaviour: pursue an illusion of happiness and escape thinking by getting involved in alcohol or drugs, work, hunting, sports, sexual activities, pornography, violent movies or by shutting off people around them and watching TV.
- Focus only on pleasant memories: remember only good things.
- Focus only on negative memories: remember only bad things and be bitter.
- Travel or make geographical changes: travel or move to another place as a way out.

- Reframe: take a loss and find the good in it or talk only about the good, use faith to say that a person who died is in a better place (faith should not be used as a tool to avoid pain).

Exercise:
Homework

After this session, as part of your life story, take some time to think about a loss in your life, and these two tasks.

In your notebook, make some notes:
How long did it take you to accept that your loss was real, was permanent?

- What problems did you encounter in doing this?
- What was helpful to you in accepting it?
- OR, Is the loss still so new, or so unresolved that you feel you have NOT accepted it?

Did you try to avoid the pain? Did the ways of avoiding pain listed above apply to you and your loss? In what way?

Keep these notes as a part of your own "life story". You do not have to share them with the group, or with the counselors unless you want to.

Purpose:
To continue learning about the grieving tasks of adjusting and moving on with life.

How to do the activity:
This is an opportunity for the group members to share stories and feelings. Therefore, during the explanations on grieving tasks, the counselor should allow for interruption and pause in order for the group to think of past experiences and talk about them.

List on a flipchart the four grieving tasks: accepting reality, feeling the pain, adjusting to the environment, moving on with life.

Talk about the last two tasks.

Adjusting, or understanding how one's life is different.

This requires:

- Time: "It takes time to heal" and talking about one's feelings is important.
- Talking in detail about the loss.
- Dealing with feelings: some feelings are hidden and difficult to deal with, such as feelings of anger and blame towards a person who died (ex: the person did not have the right to leave, the person did not apologize for past mean behaviour, etc.). This is especially important when the death is due to suicide.

Moving on with life: This task completes the cycle of grief and addresses the healing process. It's where a person, after going through the grieving process, chooses to start focusing on new priorities. It includes:

Moving on (emotional relocation): expresses the fact that the loss, after having been thought of, talked about in detail and grieved, loses intensity on a day-to-day basis and talking about it gradually doesn't hurt as much.

Re-involvement: besides the necessity to think in order to grieve, it also requires getting involved again at an emotional, physical, spiritual and social level.

Reinvesting: getting on with one's life. There are a number of problems that one can face during this task:

- Fear of repeating the past and trying again. This can be too much to bear.
- Fear of losing again, of being left behind or abandoned again.

- Fear of confronting the loss -- it seems so large and unmanageable.
- Having some issues you have not dealt with, ones that bring anger, bitterness, etc., such as a traumatic (difficult, scary) experience, abuse, neglect, etc.
- Experiencing some kind of wall that blocks or stops you, and choosing not to go on, but to live in the past (always talking about past relationships, jobs, dreams, hopes).
- Taking the risk by acknowledging the past and present pain, taking into account present and future social, emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual needs and finding the right people to help with grieving issues and forming new relationships.

Length and signs of decreasing grief and healing:

- The length of grieving is different for each person and depends on various things, one of which being the existence of unresolved issues.
- Signs of decreasing grief: people get back into life, become interested in living again, and choose to begin taking up activities again, thinking more positively. The time between periods of intense grief decreases.
- Healing: the presence of a scar and a memory of how we got the scar, but without the pain that was present before.

Food for thought:

- You may want to read the following material to the group if you think the time is appropriate. There's a lot to think about in this material.
- Discuss if there is time: does it make sense to them? Can they use these thoughts in reclaiming their lives?

"Yesterday's the past and tomorrow's the future. Today is a gift — which is why they call it the present." Bill Keane

Learning from the past, living in the present:

- "The past no longer exists and the future has yet to exist. So, it is only in the present that we can live. Instead of wallowing in the past, learn from it.
- "What did you do wrong? Correct your behaviour!
- What did you do right? Keep doing it!
- "Learn from the past with open eyes. Be brutally honest. Learn from what has happened, not from what you imagined has happened. Learn and move on.
- "Use the past as a guidepost, not as a hitching post. Or, as Ivern Ball wrote, 'The past should be a springboard, not a hammock.'
- "Learn to let go of the past. Until you release it, you won't be free to work on the present. And don't be afraid of the past. It can't reach out into the present and bite you. Let the dead rest in peace and focus on the only moment you are alive, which is NOW." -- Chuck Gallozzi

Exercise:

Homework

As for the previous session, make notes in your notebook about how you applied the concepts of adjusting to the situation and emotionally relocating and moving on with life to your own loss(es). Again, these are for you, and do not have to be shared.

Session 24 & 25

COUPLES COUNSELING SESSION

At this point, two sessions on couples counselling (conjoint therapy) will be incorporated into the counselling program:

- Individual sessions for couples will run about an hour per session.
- If the sessions are for two or more couples, they will likely be longer, up to two hours.

This counselling may be done as individual couples with both counselors present, or as pairs of couples, or as a small group of couples.

It may be done during the same week as group sessions (but at a different time from the groups) or may be done instead of group sessions for a week.

The decision on how to handle this must be left up to the counselors – if the group is large or problems are intense, it may make sense to suspend group sessions for a week and schedule all the couples' sessions into every available time slot. If holidays are approaching and the counselors are concerned about the stability of the group, it may make sense to offer couples counselling without suspending the group meetings.

The important thing is that the Counselors feel free to deal with this based on their intuition and knowledge of the present group dynamics.

Session 26

Purpose:

Defining a healthy relationship

To help each person identify behavioural changes needed for his relationship to be healthier.

How to do the activity:

Provide the group with paper and pencils. Or, they can use their notebooks. Think of behavioural changes you could make to have a healthier relationship.

Write them down. Allow 10 minutes.

Ask participants to share some of the changes they have recorded, and write these on the flipchart. Encourage them to talk about each change and explain how they think the change will better the relationship.

Review the following with the group:

Remember:

- A relationship is the responsibility of both partners.
- A partner has no power over the other partner's actions, choices or feelings.
- A partner has control only over one's own actions, choices and feelings.
- A person has the right to end (or take a break from) a relationship that is unhealthy.

Qualities of a healthy relationship:

- Never using abuse or violence.
- Talking and hearing:
  - Listening and trying to understand what a partner is saying.

  - Watching for feelings behind words.
  - Being honest about one's feelings.
  - Saying things at the right time and place.
  - Letting go of the need to win all the time (reaching a good agreement feels better).
- Being fair:
  - Being responsible for one's own well-being and feelings.
  - Not feeling responsible for how other people act.
  - Not expecting a partner to meet all one's needs.
  - Being willing to depend on a partner.
  - Learning to share work equally.
  - Supporting a partner's goals and activities (being glad of her success).
- Knowing oneself:
  - Taking time to continue learning about oneself, understanding the reason for a particular act, keeping in touch with one's feelings.
  - Taking time to reflect on one's perspective of life.
  - Accepting oneself.
  - Taking time to take care of one's needs.
  - Being able to admit a mistake and apologizing when it is right to do so.
  - Not judging oneself or others.

Thoughts to remember:

Abuse and violence are both unnecessary.
The quality of a relationship is the responsibility of both partners.
Neither partner can do this alone. They must work as a team.

Encourage participants to add any of the changes brought up by others to their own list in their notebook.

Next sessions:

- During the next sessions, you will be meeting with Elders who have agreed to help with this program. They will be sharing their own life experiences with you.
- Between now and next session, we would like you to write any questions you would like to ask of the Elders, or any issues you would like them to address on a sheet of paper and leave it with the Counselor. We will pass this on to the Elders before the session.

Handout:

Relationship Rules (RR)#5, Rules 22 – 25.
Pass out the last "Relationship Rules" handout. Ask how these are working, and if people like them.

Suggest they keep all of these, and offer additional copies to those who may have lost some of the ones they received earlier.

Participants could fold them and place in a family Bible if they want.

Session 27

Purpose:

To show that a healthy and lasting relationship can be achieved.

An elderly couple from the community will share their story and experiences with the group.

How to do the activity:

Before the session:

- Meet the Elders who will participate in sessions 27, 28 and 29, (such persons must have been identified before the group sessions started and should be the same for both sessions) and provide some background information on how the group is doing.
- Tell the Elders that they have no particular constraints for those sessions except the time frame.

In order to assist the Elders, you can provide them with a list of questions that they could address with the group. If they would find it easier, you can use the questions to guide the presentation, in the style of an interview. Or, you can review the questions with the members of the group and each member can take a question to ask.

Examples of questions:

- How did you meet?
- If you were promised to each other by your parents, how did you build your relationship?
- How did you learn more about each other? Did it take long to establish a relationship?
- What problems did you have together? How did you solve these problems? Did you talk to someone about the problems and if yes, whom did you talk to?

- What do you like about each other?
- What do you think makes a good relationship?
- Why do you think your relationship has been so good for so long?
- What families in our community do you feel are good examples of healthy families?
- What can we learn from these?

Have the Elders present at the beginning of the session and introduce them to the group. Being present at the beginning of the session could help the couple have an idea of the group's dynamics.

The group can ask additional questions as the Elders talk about their experience or at the end of the presentation. Choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Session 28

Purpose:

To allow Elders to express their perspectives, and the group to express their expectations.

How to do the activity:

Before the session:

Have the Elders present at the beginning of session 28 and introduce them to the group. Being present at the beginning of the session could help the Elders have an idea of the group's dynamics.

The content of this session needs to be left up to the Counselors.

The instructions given to the Elders will be based almost entirely on what has transpired in the previous sessions, where the counselors perceive the group to be at the present time, and their feelings as to what issues need to be addressed.

The counselor will outline questions to guide the Elders prior to the session and will discuss these with the Elders before the session.

Session 29

Purpose:

To encourage the group to talk about what they have learned during the sessions and to acknowledge and reinforce their gains.

(All members of the Elders' Committee should be invited to this session).

How to do the activity:

Write some or all of the following questions on a flipchart and ask each person to answer them (50 minutes):

You can do this by the question, which is probably easier on the participants. Ask the first question and go through the group, getting input from each person in turn. Then ask the next one, and go through the group in a different order, again getting input. This engages people better than making one person do all the questions and then moving to the next.

- What positive changes have you noticed in yourself and in your relationship since starting in this program?
- What do you think led to those changes?
- Are there problems that may occur again and that you need to be aware of? What are the signs you have to look for?
- Who would you turn to for support? An Elder, a friend, a group member, etc.
- What do you think are the best ways for you to cope with these problems if they occur again?
- Have you identified changes you still need to make? What changes?

Offer the Elders' Committee members the opportunity to interact or talk to the group (10-15 minutes).

Provide an opportunity for the group members to ask questions of the Elders Committee once more.

Make your final remarks (10 minutes). Most of this is up to the Counselor but you may wish to address the following:

Resources:

There are a number of resources that are still available to participants in this program.

Further counselling or assistance (these resources will differ from community to community):

- There are some counselling services available in Rankin Inlet, including the Kivalliq Outreach Program, and some church leaders and Elders.
- Social Services offers some assistance; if you need help, contact them.
- The Health Centre can sometimes help, especially with issues regarding mental health.
- The RCMP can assist if a situation becomes critical.
- If addictions are an issue, see the counselors at Aqsaaraaq.

How to ask questions:

- Please do not be shy about asking questions. All these agencies are there to help, but you must be able to tell them what you want help with.
- Plan out what you want to ask in advance, and make notes about this. Take the notes with you so you do not forget what you plan to say.
- Remember, there is no such thing as a “stupid question”. You are asking questions because you need to know something.
- Confidentiality is always an issue. The people working in this field are required to keep as much confidential as possible, but it is important for you to know that there are some issues that they are REQUIRED BY LAW to report. These include:

- Any evidence of child abuse
- Any indication that an individual may be planning to do harm to himself or another person
- Some communicable diseases

Self study or research:
Pulaarvik Kablu offers access to computers and the Internet at two CAP sites, one at the friendship centre offices, and one in the Library. If you don't have access to a computer, you can go to either CAP site and surf the Internet for additional information, books, or other materials. There is a huge amount available on the Internet on healthy relationships, self esteem, insecurity, abuse, jealousy, addictions, family violence, spousal abuse, and more. Just go to www.google.ca

Counselors can make any remarks they wish about their personal availability (or the availability of Elders) to these group members. This is impossible to standardize in advance.

Personal notebooks: Remind people that the notebooks are theirs, and encourage them to continue to use them if they find them helpful.

They do not have to show these notebooks to anyone. If they are concerned about others reading what they have written, they can destroy the notebook or the parts which concern them.

Program evaluation: Ask for comments on how the participants felt this group counselling went, and ask for their input as to changes they think would make it more useful.

Likely both counselors will be present for this final session. One should ask questions and the other should take notes.

Optional material

This material can be used at the discretion of the Counselor.

Purpose:

To look at what keeps an abused person in an abusive relationship.

How to do the activity:

Think of reasons why you think an abused person might stay in an abusive relationship. More than 80% of victims of spousal abuse across North America have left five or more times.

Write answers given on a flipchart.

On a different flipchart, write several reasons not mentioned by the group. Reasons:

Situation-related factors

The victim:

- Wants the kids to grow up with two parents.
- Has no place to go.
- Has no money or source of income.
- Is afraid of being hurt (or killed) or the children being hurt.
- Is afraid of losing the kids.
- Has no skill to find a job and make it on her own.
- Doesn't know what else to do.
- Would leave with nothing, as her partner owns everything.
- Is afraid of making a complaint and going to court.
- Believes that leaving the relationship is against her religion.
- Is afraid that the family and the community will turn their back on her.
- Has been told by preacher, family, and counselors that it's best to stay and keep the family together.

Emotion-related factors

The victim:

- Feels guilty or ashamed about the failure of the relationship.
- Is insecure about living without emotional support.
- Is afraid of loneliness, of being isolated by the community.
- Is emotionally dependent on her partner.
- Needs to be loved.
- Thinks that her partner will not be able to live without her.
- Is responding to her partner's threats of suicide.
- Loves her partner and wants to believe that he will change.
- Believes that her partner needs her and that she can help.
- Fears making major life changes.

Discuss all the reasons listed. Can you think of others? Place the Cycle of Violence diagram on the wall and talk again about how the cycle of violence affects a person who is abused.

Purpose:

To help group members understand the value of nurturing and protecting their self-esteem, and how a lack of self-esteem or self-confidence can undermine everything they do in life.

Note to Counselors: This material can be used as a handout or used as the core for a session. Take it point by point and encourage discussion as you proceed.

Understanding Self-Esteem:

- Self-esteem is how good we feel about who we are.
- The impact of self-esteem, or the lack of it, is quite complicated and far-reaching. "Our level of self-esteem affects virtually everything we think, say, and do. It affects how we see the world and our place in it. It affects how others in the world see and treat us. It affects the choices we make -- choices about

> what we will do with our lives and with whom we will be involved. It affects our ability to both give and receive love. And, it affects our ability to take action to change things that need to be changed." - Linda Tschirhart Sanford, Mary Ellen Donovan, Women & Self-Esteem

Accepting who we are helps develop a healthy self-esteem and can make a huge impact on how we live our lives.

> Someone with healthy self-esteem is aware of his/her potential, knows the many facets that make him/her unique, and values and respects himself or herself. He/She knows that his or her imperfections or inadequacies are not inherently bad; and, they do not become overwhelming to the point that they completely define him or her value as a person. He/She knows that no one's perfect, it's human to have limitations and make mistakes.

Regardless of self-esteem status, everyone doubts their own self-worth or value at one time or another during their lifetimes.

> It can become all too easy to compare ourselves to others. When this self-comparison is occasional, it can be beneficial. It can help us achieve goals and ideals that we admire and respect in other people.
>
> However, when self-comparison becomes more frequent, and even all-consuming; and, when we, in our own estimation, do not measure up to our perception of others, it can become self-destructive. The quality of our lives is severely limited.

Although it may not be easy, it's not impossible to feel better about yourself. Here are some tips to help boost your self-esteem:

- **Accept who you are** -- your strengths and weaknesses, feelings and emotions. This doesn't mean we don't have to work on things.

- **Forgive yourself for mistakes**, and see these as opportunities to learn and grow.
- **Take alone time**: read, play, walk, go hunting, write... to nurture yourself. Develop your talents and abilities. Don't always depend on others to build you up or tear you down. Think for yourself; evaluate yourself.
- **Trust your thoughts and intuitions**. Do what makes you feel happy and fulfilled.
- **Take pride in your achievements**.
- **Set realistic goals.**
- **Replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk** and kind, loving statements.
- When something goes wrong, instead of blaming yourself, that you must have done something wrong or that there's something wrong with you, **learn to accept that it may not have anything to do with you**.
- **Don't depend on others to make you feel good**. This will help you deal with rejection, and rejection is a part of life.
- **Exercise, eat right, and get plenty of sleep**. Being exhausted and out of shape can leave you feeling more vulnerable to insecurity, anxiety, and dissatisfaction.
- **Surround yourself with positive, healthy people.**
- **Give of yourself -- get involved in projects**, which help other people or the environment: your kids' activities, church, scouts, athletics, literacy programs, and community events. You will feel pride in what you are doing and this will help build your self-confidence and self-esteem.

Rankin Inlet Spousal Abuse Counseling Program

Handouts for Abuser's group

Handout #	Session:	Title of Handout
2.1	2	Finding Your Warning Signs (form)
2.2	2	Warning Signs & Lines (diagram)
2.3	2	Basic Safety Plan for Abusers (form)
3.1	3	Defining Abuse (form: make about 4 copies per participant)
RR #1	3	Relationship Rules #1 – Rules 1-5
4.1	4	Circle of Violence (diagram)
4.2	4	Cycle of Violence (diagram)
5.1	5	Power and Control Wheel (diagram)
7.1	5	Time Out Wallet Card
RR #2	9	Relationship Rules #2 – Rules 6-10
9.1	9	Equality Wheel (diagram)
RR #3	9	Relationship Rules #3 – Rules 11-16
RR #4	16	Relationship Rules #4 – Rules 17-21
19.1	19	How Decisions are Made in Your Family (form)
21.1	21	Self-talk
22.1	22	Lifeline Form (form)
RR #5	26	Relationship Rules #5 – Rules 22-25

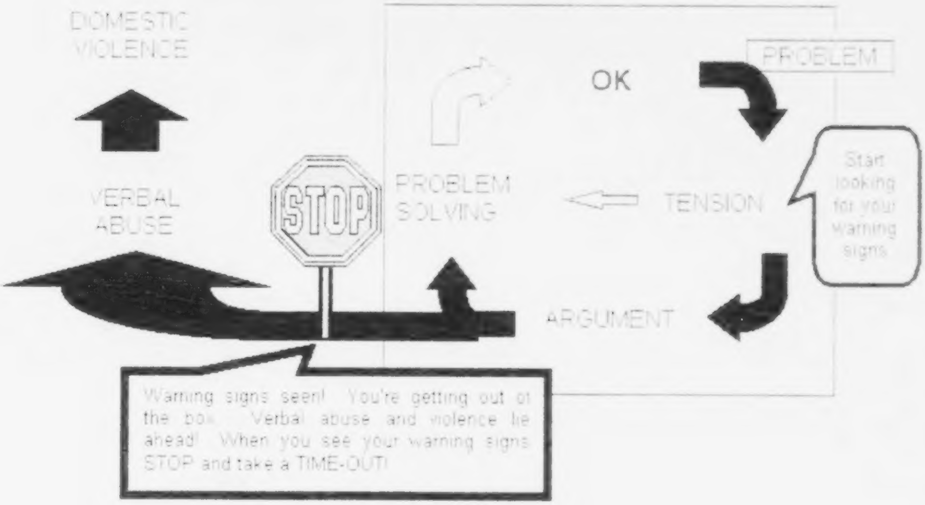
Handout 2.1: Finding YOUR Warning signs

Go over these lists and think about each sign. Then, figure out if **you** do this or not. **If not**, write "NO" under "Do you do this?" **If you do**, write "Yes". If you do something similar, write it in under "Do you do this?"
Add any other personal warning signs for yourself in the blanks.

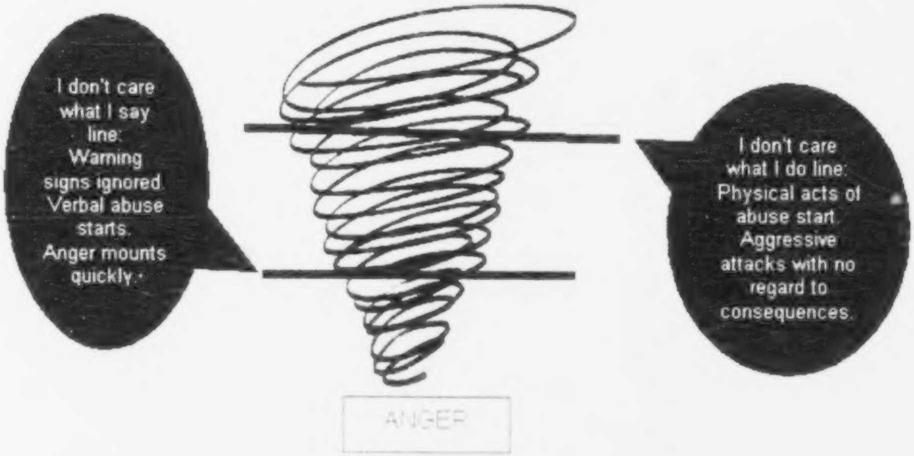
WHAT YOU *DO* (behaviour)	**Do YOU do this?**
Start to yell	
Go closer to the person I'm talking to	
Curse	
Glare	
Start saying insulting things	
Threaten person I'm in conflict with	
Start saying hurtful things	
Slam door, punch wall or hit desk	
Throw something or break something	
Shake fist	
WHAT YOU *FEEL* IN YOUR BODY	
Tight stomach and/or muscles	
Increased heart rate	
Sweating palms	
Trembling hands, shakiness	
Flushed face, red neck	
Rapid breathing / tending to hold your breath	
Clenched teeth	
Vision seems to narrow/darken (tunnel vision)	
WHAT YOU *THINK*	
Mental images of violence	
Thinking," You're such a _____" (name-calling)	
Thinking: "I ought to teach you a lesson…."	
Thinking: "I'll show you who's boss!"	
Thinking: "You asked for this!"	
Thinking: "You pushed me too far!"	
"Awfulizing" (labelling situation as "terrible")	
Mentally labelling abusive behaviour as something else (self-defence, standing up for my rights, etc.)	
Constantly thinking that something offends you.	

Handout 2.2: Warning Signs

Warning Signs and Time-Out


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VERBAL ABUSE
STOP
PROBLEM SOLVING
OK
PROBLEM
TENSION
Start looking for your warning signs
ARGUMENT
Warning signs seen! You're getting out of the box. Verbal abuse and violence lie ahead! When you see your warning signs STOP and take a TIME-OUT!

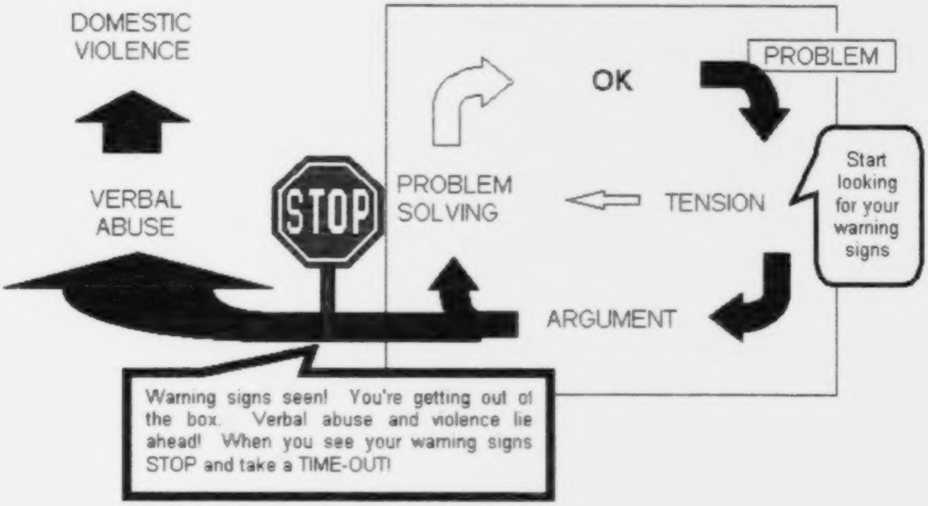
Crossing the Lines


I don't care what I say line: Warning signs ignored. Verbal abuse starts. Anger mounts quickly.
I don't care what I do line: Physical acts of abuse start. Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences.
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. ( )

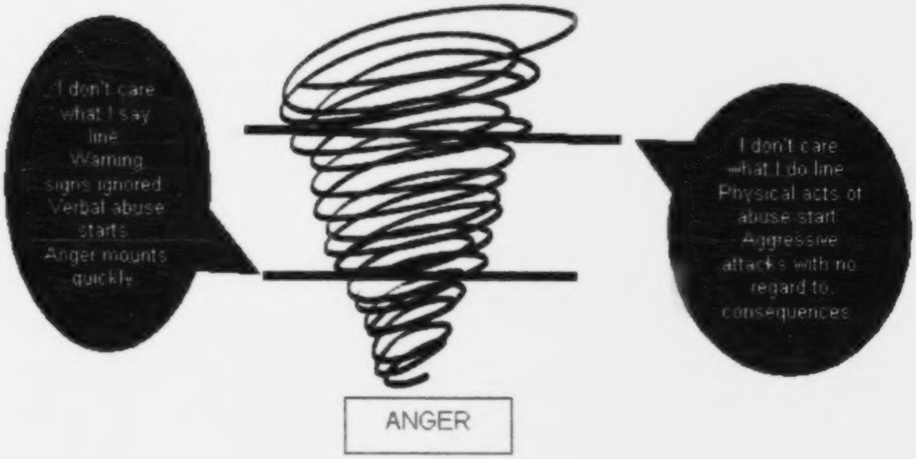
Handout 2.2: Warning Signs

Warning Signs and Time-Out


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VERBAL ABUSE
STOP
PROBLEM SOLVING
OK
PROBLEM
TENSION
ARGUMENT
Start looking for your warning signs

Warning signs seen! You're getting out of the box. Verbal abuse and violence lie ahead! When you see your warning signs STOP and take a TIME-OUT!

Crossing the Lines


I don't care what I say line
Warning signs ignored
Verbal abuse starts
Anger mounts quickly
I don't care what I do line
Physical acts of abuse start
Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. (www.continuingedcourses.net/index.php)

Handout 2.3: A Basic Safety Plan for Abusers:

Avoid all use of alcohol or drugs in your home. *This is possibly the single most useful thing you can do to decrease violence at home.* Make an agreement with your partner to do this while both of you are sober and not fighting.

If possible, stop drinking (or drugs) entirely. In general, when there are marital problems it is best not to drink at all until those problems are reduced or solved. Know your own warning signs, and if you observe these, call a Time Out. Write your warning signs in this box:

My warning signs:

Know your partner's warning signs and monitor these if you are getting into a conflict and tensions are rising.

Use a Time Out *before* things get out of hand.

Memorize all the steps needed to do a Time Out.

Consider a place where you could go if things get out of hand. It is better for you to leave and go stay with a friend than to have violence take place, which will result in another charge against you.

Then, make sure you DO leave while you are still thinking rationally. This is really important if your partner is drinking.

Talk to a friend, family member, or counselor about how to handle an emergency call from you for help.

Decide ahead of time at what point you should leave. Discuss this issue with your counselor.

If your partner wants to leave, do not *ever* try to prevent it. Preventing someone from leaving is against the law (unlawful confinement) and you could be charged.
Make absolutely sure all firearms are either removed from the home or make sure they are stored with bolts removed and ammo in an entirely separate place (this is legally required anyway and is a good idea for children's safety).
Emergency numbers (will vary by community):
Department of Social Services: 645-5064
Spousal Abuse Program: 645-3785
Additions to this plan: Write any additions in below.

Handout 3.1:Defining Abuse

Participants can use the form below to record their own observations about abuse in their families. Use a separate form for each event. This can be stuck into the participant's notebook.

Event: What happened, what form of abuse?	**Examples:** beating, cursing, taking cheques
Kind of abuse: (circle one or more) ->	Physical Emotional/verbal Spiritual Financial Sexual Other:__________
What set off (triggered) this incident?	Impaired during incident? Circle one: Impaired Not impaired
Impact on Partner:	Impact on kids or other family members:
How could this abuse be prevented or avoided?	How could I change my behavior to keep this from happening again?
Questions for counselors:	

Relationship Rules (RR)#1, Rules 1 - 5

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 5 basic rules for relationships, the first of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

1. **Choose a partner wisely and well.**

We are attracted to people for all kinds of reasons. Sometimes they remind us of someone from our past, or may shower us with gifts and make us feel important. This can be deceiving. Evaluate a potential partner carefully. Look at their character, personality, values, their generosity of spirit, the relationship between their words and actions, and especially their relationships with others. Don't rush. Make sure you would want this person as the mother/father of your children.

2. **Know your partner's beliefs about relationships.**

Different people have different beliefs about relationships. You don't want to fall in love with someone who is dishonest in their relationships. They will be dishonest with you, eventually. Communicate, and discuss this sort of thing.

3. **Don't confuse sex with love.**

In the beginning of a relationship, sexual attraction and pleasure in sex are often mistaken for love. Make sure there is more to your relationship than this.

4. **Know your needs and speak up for them clearly.**

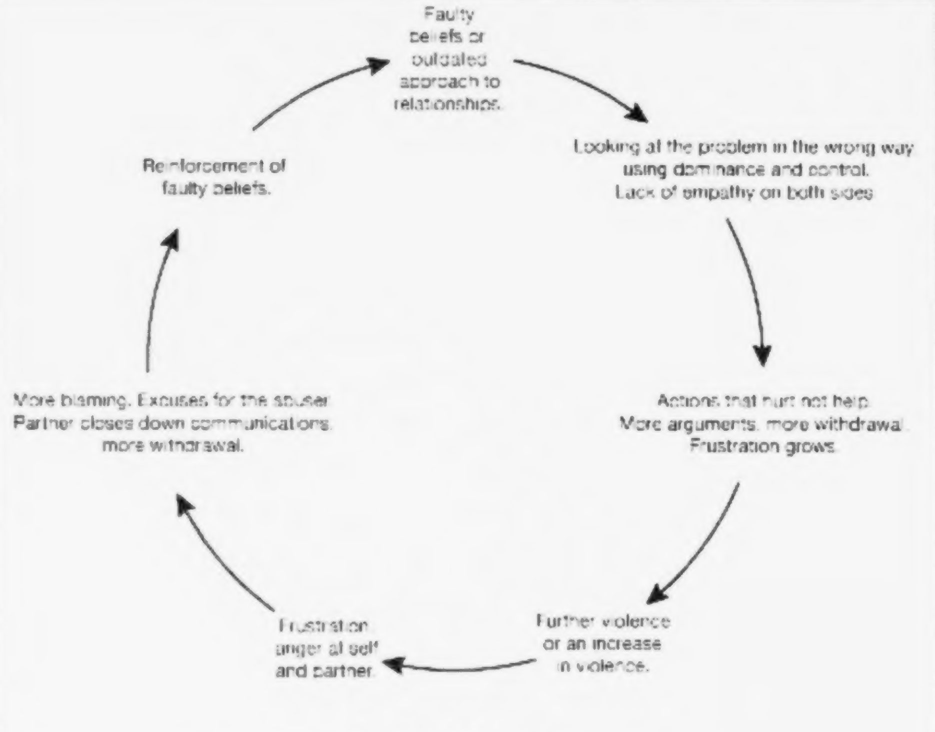
A relationship is not a guessing game. Many people, men as well as women, fear stating their needs and, as a result, do this poorly. The result is disappointment at not getting what they want and anger at a partner for not having met their (unstated) needs. Closeness cannot occur without honesty. Your partner is not a mind reader. Communicate with him/her.

5. **View yourselves as a team**.

Think of yourself and your partner as working together toward a goal you both share. This means you each bring different perspectives and strengths to make a team that is stronger than either of yourselves alone.

Handout 4.1: Circle of Violence.

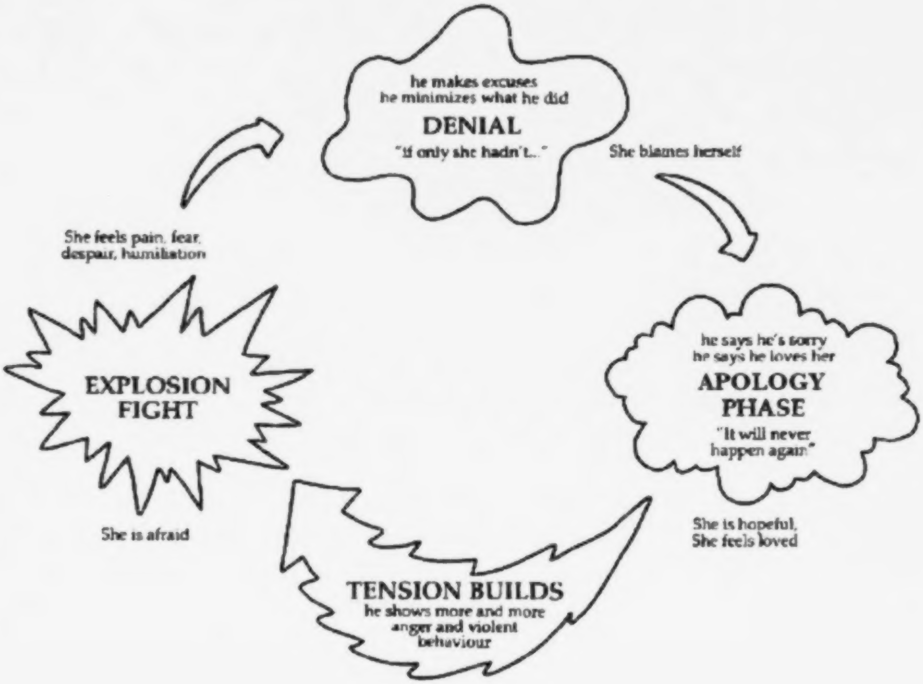
This diagram explains how violence can become established in a relationship.


Faulty beliefs or outdated approach to relationships.
Looking at the problem in the wrong way using dominance and control. Lack of empathy on both sides
Actions that hurt not help. More arguments, more withdrawal. Frustration grows.
Further violence or an increase in violence.
Frustration, anger at self and partner.
More blaming. Excuses for the abuser. Partner closes down communications, more withdrawal.
Reinforcement of faulty beliefs.

Cycle of Violence

Deborah Sinclair, Understanding Wife Assault: A Training Manual for Counselors and Advocates, Publications Ontario, Toronto, 1985

Handout 4.2: Cycle of Abuse


he makes excuses
he minimizes what he did
DENIAL
"If only she hadn't..."
She blames herself
he says he's sorry
he says he loves her
APOLOGY PHASE
"It will never happen again"
She is hopeful,
She feels loved
TENSION BUILDS
he shows more and more anger and violent behaviour
She is afraid
EXPLOSION FIGHT
She feels pain, fear, despair, humiliation

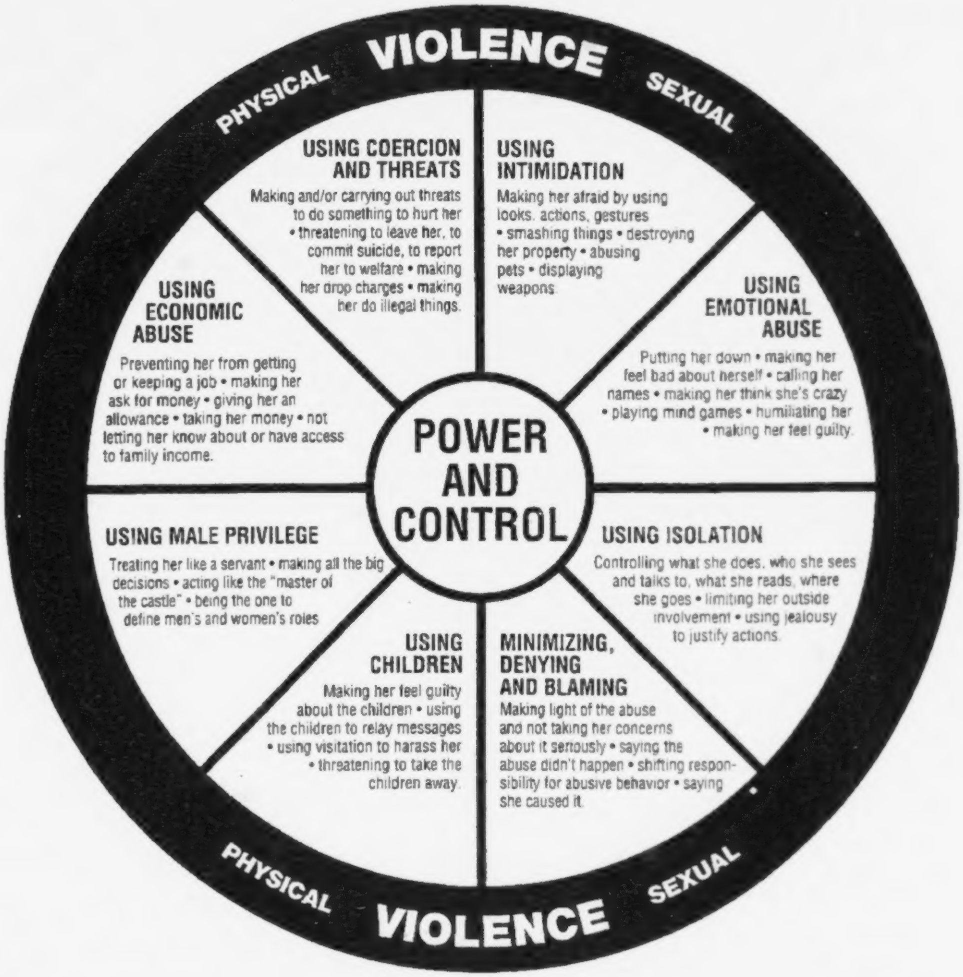
The Cycle of Abuse

The cycle can cover a long or short period of time

The violence usually gets worse

The apology or "honeymoon" phase, will eventually disappear

Handout 5.1: Power and Control Wheel



USING COERCION AND THREATS
Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her • threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges • making her do illegal things.

USING INTIMIDATION
Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures • smashing things • destroying her property • abusing pets • displaying weapons.

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE
Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE
Putting her down • making her feel bad about herself • calling her names • making her think she's crazy • playing mind games • humiliating her • making her feel guilty.

USING MALE PRIVILEGE
Treating her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles

USING ISOLATION
Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

USING CHILDREN
Making her feel guilty about the children • using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass her • threatening to take the children away.

MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING
Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused it.

Minnesota Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806

Handout 7.1: Time Out wallet card

Fold this and place it in your wallet.

TIME OUT CARD

Your *warning signs* mean, "I need a time out." Leave for a minimum of one hour, then return. If you will be away longer, call partner and advise.

No alcohol, no drugs, no driving, no weapons.

Walk, breath deeply, and self-talk (self-calming, decide what you will say to deal with the problem without anger).

Check your own warning signs before returning. If you are ok, return home or call partner to see how she is feeling. If she is ok, return home. If she's not, ask if she wants a further time out.

When you return, check in, let partner know you are back.
If all is ok, resume discussion like adults.

If it escalates, take another time out.

Relationship Rules (RR)#2, Rules 6 - 10

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 5 basic rules for relationships, second of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

6. Know how to respect and manage differences.

Disagreements don't sink relationships. Lack of respect and name-calling does. Learn how to handle negative feelings, as these will occur due to differences between two people. Avoiding conflicts is NOT managing them. Understanding this is essential.

7. Ask questions honestly, but don't threaten.

If you don't understand or like something your partner is doing, ask about it and why he or she is doing it. Talk and explore, don't assume.

8. Solve problems as they arise.

Don't let resentments simmer. Most of what goes wrong in relationships can be traced to hurt feelings, leading partners to erect defenses against one another and to become strangers. Or enemies.

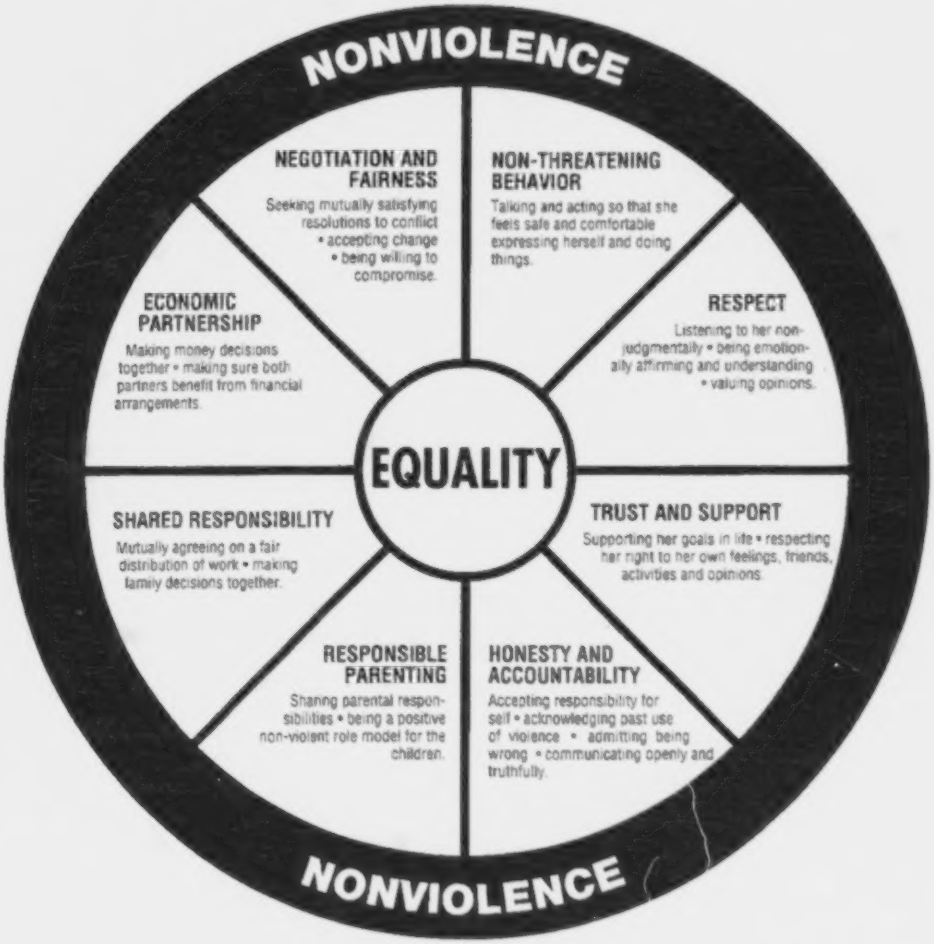
9. Learn to negotiate. And to re-negotiate.

Modern relationships no longer rely on cultural roles. Couples create their own roles, so almost every act requires negotiation. It works best when good will prevails. Because people's needs and life's demands change over time, good relationships are constantly negotiated and re-negotiated.

10. Listen, truly listen...and don't judge.

Listen to your partner's concerns and complaints without judgment. Much of the time, just having someone listen is all we need. "Being there" and listening opens the door to confiding. Try hard to look at things from your partner's perspective as well as your own.

Equality Wheel


NONVIOLENCE
NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS
Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict • accepting change • being willing to compromise.
NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR
Talking and acting so that she feels safe and comfortable expressing herself and doing things.
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP
Making money decisions together • making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.
RESPECT
Listening to her non-judgmentally • being emotionally affirming and understanding • valuing opinions.
EQUALITY
SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work • making family decisions together.
TRUST AND SUPPORT
Supporting her goals in life • respecting her right to her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions.
RESPONSIBLE PARENTING
Sharing parental responsibilities • being a positive non-violent role model for the children.
HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
Accepting responsibility for self • acknowledging past use of violence • admitting being wrong • communicating openly and truthfully.
NONVIOLENCE

Minnesota Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806

Relationship Rules (RR)#3, Rules 11 - 16

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 6 basic rules for relationships, third of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

11. Work hard at maintaining closeness.

Closeness doesn't happen by itself. In its absence, people drift apart and are susceptible to affairs. A good relationship isn't an end goal; it's a lifelong process maintained through regular attention.

12. Take a long-range view.

A marriage is an agreement to spend a future together. Check out your dreams with each other regularly to make sure you're both on the same path. Update your dreams regularly.

13. Never underestimate the power of good grooming.

Nothing says, "I don't care" like coming into an intimate relationship personally dirty. Keep yourself clean or make yourself clean for your partner.

14. Sex is good. Pillow talk is better.

Sex is easy; intimacy is difficult. It requires honesty, openness, self-disclosure, and sharing concerns, fears, and sadness as well as hopes and dreams.

15. Never go to sleep angry. Try a little tenderness.

Try to live by this and your relationship will get easier. Even if you can't solve a problem by bedtime, call a truce, say how much you love each other and go to bed with respect, regard, and love.

16. Apologize, apologize, apologize.

Anyone can make a mistake. It's essential you try to repair these. Willingness to apologize is highly predictive of marital happiness. Your repair attempts can be clumsy or funny, even sarcastic, but willingness to make up after an argument is central to every happy marriage.

Relationship Rules (RR)#4, Rules 17 – 21

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 5 basic rules for relationships, fourth of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

17. Reduce dependency.

Some dependency is good, but complete dependency on a partner for *all* one's needs invites unhappiness. We're all dependent to a degree -- on friends, mentors, spouses….and men have just as many dependency needs as women. Just don't overwhelm your partner with neediness.

18. Maintain self-respect and self-esteem.

It's easier for someone to like you and to be around you when you like yourself. Research has shown that the more roles people fill, the better their self-esteem. Meaningful work -- paid or volunteer -- has long been one of the most important ways to exercise and fortify a sense of self.

19. Enrich your relationship

A relationship can be made richer by bringing into it new interests from outside the relationship. The more passions in life that you have, and share, the richer your relationship will be.

20. Cooperate, cooperate, cooperate.

Share responsibilities in life. Relationships work ONLY when they are two-way streets, with much give and take. You should both spend time with the kids, don't leave all school duties to one parent. You should also share responsibilities around the house as this not only makes your spouse feel better, but it sets a good example for your children.

21. Be spontaneous.

You deserve to have fun with your partner, and good surprises add fun. If you are traveling, bring back a little treat. Invite him/her out for a dinner "date". Greet him after a hunting trip with a good meal, including candles. Wake her up with a kiss. Praise your kids, especially when they don't expect it.

Handout 19.1: Decision-making and dominance.

Make an X in the column that describes the way decisions are currently made in your relationship. Add other decisions if you wish.

Decisions	Almost always me	Shared equally	Almost always my partner
Where to live			
Whether my partner should work			
Whether I should work, or not			
What job my partner should take			
What job I should take			
Whether/when to have children			
Whether I can attend church and which church I attend			
How to handle finances			
What major purchases to make			
What to do for fun			
Who I can socialize with			
When to have sex			
How to discipline children			
What family activities to do			
Whether and when to go hunting/fishing, etc.			
When to visit relatives			

Handout: 21.1: Self-Talk

Exercise: Here's a scenario. Fill in the negative self-talk part with what **you would have said to yourself in the past.** Then fill in the positive column with what **you think will work if you use positive self-talk**. We've omitted the "beliefs" section to make this quicker to do.

Negative	Positive
Your partner leaves at 6 pm to go to the Northern. It closes at 7 pm, but by 8 she is still not home. She comes home at 8:30 PM, and says she ran into a friend from Iqaluit who was in town, and they went for a coffee.	Your partner leaves at 6 pm to go to the Northern. It closes at 7 pm, but by 8 she is still not home. She comes home at 8:30 PM, and says she ran into a friend from Iqaluit who was in town, and they went for a coffee.
Self-talk:	***Self-talk:***
Feelings:	***Feelings:***
Actions:	***Actions:***

Handout 22.1 Life Story Form

Lifeline for ______________________________

Write in events that affected your life.	**Events perceived as "good" go above the line.** **Events perceived as "bad" go below the line.**

Date: ____

The spaces (for years) are not exactly even as we've tried to give you more space to write in years when there may be more events.

Years: 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60

Relationship Rules (RR)#5, Rules 22 - 25

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 4 basic rules for relationships, last of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

22. Stay healthy.

Maintain your energy. Stay healthy. If at all possible, avoid things that erode your health. You know what these are…and you know this includes tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. If you are addicted, you may not be able to give up all of these, but maybe you can give up two out of three?

23. Work together through hard times.

Recognize that all relationships have their ups and downs and do not ride at a continuous high all the time. No relationship is perfect all the time. Working together through the hard times will make the relationship stronger.

24. Examine and learn from a bad relationship.

Learn from a bad relationship by examining it as a reflection of your beliefs about yourself. Don't just run away from a bad relationship; you'll only repeat it with the next partner. Use it as a mirror to look at yourself, to understand what part of you created the bad relationship, and what part of you can affect the current one. Change yourself before you change your relationship.

25. Understand love as a tide, ebbing and flowing.

Understand that love is not an absolute, not a limited commodity that you either have or don't have. "Love is a feeling that ebbs and flows depending on how you treat each other. If you learn new ways to interact, the feelings can come flowing back, often stronger than before." - Dianne Sollee, SmartMarriages

Feel free to add to these, developing your own rules. Share with the rest of the group if you wish.

Topics of Sessions for Victim's Group

Topics	Session	Details	Handouts & Videos	Page #
Group rules Meeting the group	1	Agreement on group rules Getting to know each other Signs before violence (warning signs) Making a safety plan Understanding assignments that will be given to spouses	1.1, 1.2, 1.3 1.4, 1.5	154
What is spousal abuse? Impacts of spousal abuse	2	Definition and kinds of abuse How abuse hurts victims and children How it increases bad feelings about oneself How it increases anger	2.1 Video: "Reflections from the Heart of a Child"	161
Practical Helps	3	Understanding Time Outs Review of safety plan Rules for Relationships (intro)	1.5 review RR#1 1-5	169
Understanding violence	4	Excuses and Truths An Elders' perspective		175
	5	Cycle of violence Abusive behaviour	5.1, 5.2 5.3	179
Staying in an abusive relationship	6	Why a victim stays		184
	7	Surviving abuse: A couples' perspective	Video: "Summer in the Life of Louisa"	186
	8	Community influence Elders' perspectives		188
Changing beliefs and behaviour	9	Equality and balance: Equality Wheel Self esteem	9.1 RR#2 6-10 9.2	190
	10	Changing is possible		194
Communications	11	Principles of communication		196
Couples Counseling	12	Couples counseling (individual sessions)	RR#3 11-16	199
	13	Couples counseling (individual sessions)		200
Communications, cont'd	14	Communications skills		201
	15	Expressing feelings safely		206
Conflict	16	Conflict is normal		208
	17	Settle things fairly: "Fair fighting" rules	RR#4: 17-21	210

Jealousy	18	Insecurity and trust		213
	19	A Couples perspective		218
Sex roles stereotyping	20	Characteristics and Roles Dominance & Decision-making	21.1	220
	21	Sexual beliefs		224
Grief and Loss	22	Family Dynamics Types of Losses		227
Couples' Counseling sessions	23 & 24	Couples' Counseling (Individual sessions)		232
Journey to health through grief and loss	25	Grieving tasks: • Accepting and feeling • Adjusting and moving on		233
Healthy relationships	26	The right to a healthy relationship Hopes Working toward one's hopes	27.1 RR#5: 22-25	240
	27	An elderly couples' perspective		249
Closing	28	Time to reflect		251
Handouts		List of Handouts		255

Typical Agenda for Sessions

Set-ups for Sessions:

- For most sessions, you will need a flipchart and markers, so check to see that you have a good supply of working markers. In many cases, you will be putting the chart up on the wall, so make sure there is masking tape or grey foam mounting tabs so you can put the chart up.
- In several sessions, you'll be showing a video. This is marked in the manual in the beginning of the session description.

First session:

- Open session and take attendance (5 minutes)
- Counselors and members of the group introduce themselves and may share expectations of participation in the program (15 minutes)
- Agreement on group rules (10 minutes)
- Check-in (15 minutes)

- Agenda for the session (5 minutes)
- Explain program goals, principles, provide details on number, time and place of sessions, give a description of the topics that will be dealt with during the program and mention that outside resources (including Elders) will be involved in some sessions (45 minutes)
- Activity: agreement on group rules
- Check-out and remind clients that they need to think about and develop a safety plan for discussion at the next session (15 minutes)

* Break at a convenient time (10 minutes)

Middle sessions:

- Open session, take attendance and remind of group rules (5 minutes)
- Check-in (10 minutes)
- Agenda for the session (5 minutes)
- Activity(ies)
- Check-out and remind of safety plan (10 minutes)

* Break at a convenient time (10 minutes)

Last session:

- Open session, take attendance and remind of group rules (5 minutes)
- Check-in (15 minutes)
- Agenda for the session (5 minutes)
- Activity: a time to reflect
- Closing remarks by counselors
- Check-out and remind of safety plan (15 minutes)

* Break at a convenient time (10 minutes)

Session 1

Purpose:

To agree on rules that will allow the group to work well and know what to expect.

Materials:

Flipchart and marker (These are needed for all sessions, and will not be listed after this. Make sure you replace newsprint and markers as needed; keep a backup supply.)

How to do the activity:

- Write on a flipchart the rules appearing below (list often used in groups of this type).
- Explain and discuss each rule with the group.
- Ask people if they wish to add rules.
- Reach an agreement on the rules people want.
- List on a flipchart the rules agreed upon by the group and hang it up so everyone can see it. Keep it on a wall for all the sessions so it can be referred to when needed.

Keep to yourself what happens during sessions
(Talking about what you learn is okay, talking about who and what is not OK.)

Talk about your own actions
(Not about other people's actions, except in the context of your partner.)

Don't interrupt when a person is talking, listen to what a person is saying

Treat each other with respect
(Even when you don't agree with what a person is saying……)

Speak for yourself
(Use "I")

Don't put people down
(Bad language makes people seem worthless)

When you talk about your partner use his first name
(Not, "he", or a negative term.)

Be honest
(With yourself and each other)

Be sober and free from drugs
(If you have been drinking or have taken drugs you will be told to leave)

Be on time for sessions

Make an effort to attend all sessions
(If you are having problems attending, talk to the counselor as soon as possible.)

Smoke and drinks only during breaks

Purpose:

To help people get to know each other.

How to do the activity:

- Have the group sit in a circle.

- The Counselor sets the stage, and should also participate, sharing personal information. It also helps to be humourous about telling about yourself (Counselor), to "break the ice" so to speak, and put people at ease.
- Ask each person to say her name and 3 things about herself. They could be her age, the number of kids or siblings she has, the job she holds, the place where she grew up, etc.
- When everyone has answered the question, ask each person to tell the person on her left 2 nice things about herself (ex: I sew well, I am a great cook, etc.). After everyone has spoken, go around the circle again and ask each person what she remembers her neighbour told her.
- After all have had their turn, ask people to think for 5 minutes about a relationship they had as children that was very important to them (it could be with a grandparent, a brother, a sister, a friend, a pet, etc.).

(Counselor can abbreviate his/her own personal info from here on, or can share fully. Use your own judgement. You want to create an atmosphere of sharing, but you don't want to be in centre stage with your own life.)

- ➢ Ask each person to say what made the relationship special for her. List on a flipchart all the things mentioned by the group.
- ➢ Have the group describe their feelings about the relationship. How they felt at the time? How they feel today? Etc.
- ➢ Ask the group if there are things that existed in the relationship they described that they could use today. List these ideas on a flipchart.
- ➢ Help people talk openly, express their feelings and trust each other.

Purpose:

To learn about warning signs before violence.

Material:

Handouts on Warning Signs and Warning Signs and Lines.

How to do the activity:

- Explain that to stay safe it you MUST be able to recognize the warning signs that appear before violence starts, and plan exactly what to do.
- Ask the group: Think about a recent incident of violence and try to recall the signs that preceded it:
    - How did you feel, physically?
    - What emotions did you feel?
    - How did your partner act?
    - Could you observe any physical signs in your partner prior to violence? Did his face get red? What about his voice? Were his hands shaking? Do you notice any muscles jumping (most common are jaw muscles or face muscles twitching)
    - What type of things does your partner say?
    - Can you tell when violence is going to happen in the next couple minutes? What signs immediately precede physical violence?
- Ask each person to talk about her signs and her partner's signs.
- Write the warning signs of the members of the group on a flipchart and the warning signs of their partners on another flipchart.
- There are three handouts for this session. Go over the one on Warning Signs and Lines (Handout 1.1) so they understand where the warning signs enter the picture. Handouts 1.2 (Your Partner's Warning Signs) and 1.3 (Signs Before Violence) both require writing, so pick the one you think most suited for this group. Ask them to complete it, listing in each category her signs and her partner's signs. (Some members of the group may have worked on this while attending crisis counseling. This session should help them be more specific about the signs.) Take about 20 minutes for this.
- Ask each person to tell the group about her signs and her partner's signs. This exercise could help others see signs they didn't think of. It will also help them become more comfortable with sharing with the group.

Exercise:

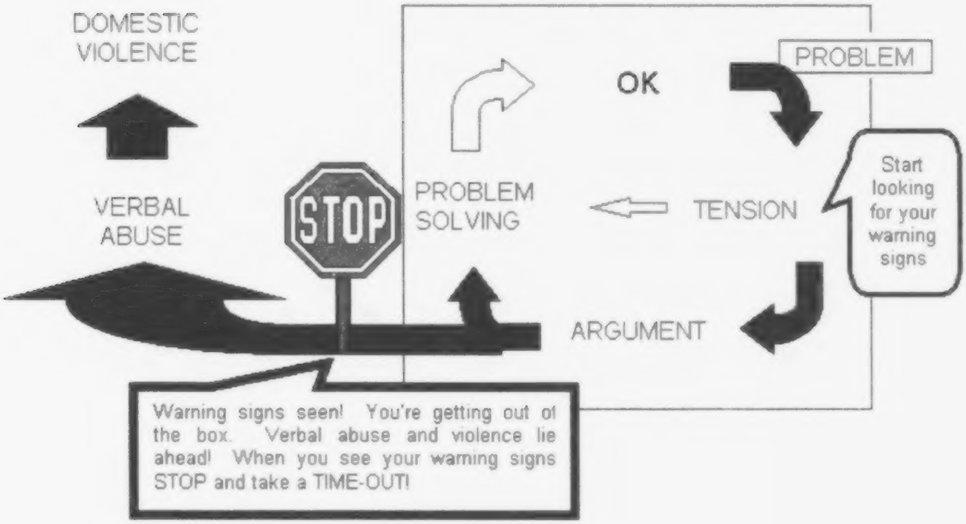
Reviewing the signs.

Ask the group to keep the handouts for this session and review them later, adding other signs that they may not have thought of during the session. They are building a “picture” of the signs (in themselves and their partners) that occur before violence. If they do not feel comfortable taking this home, they can keep it in their notebook and leave the notebook at the counseling office.

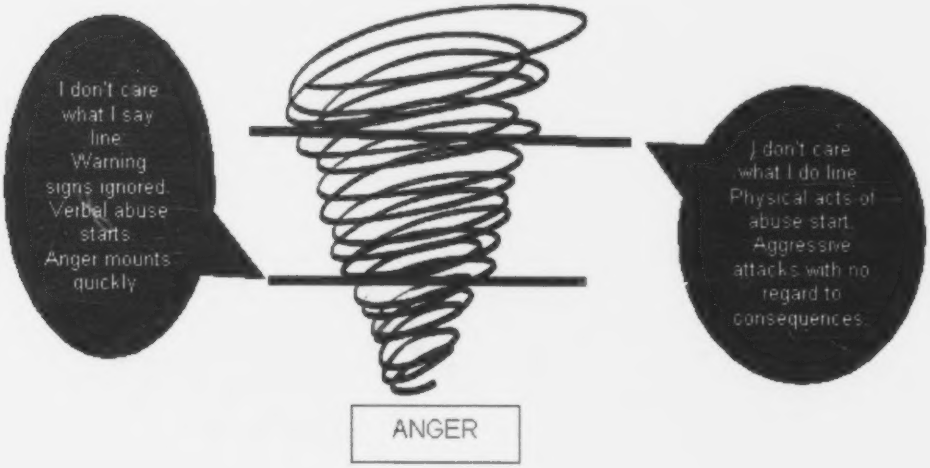
Stress how important it is to be able to identify these signs early so that they can use their safety plan or call a Time Out.

Be sure to tell them that the abusers’ program is also discussing this topic and asking the abusers to identify their own signs in order to recognize escalation to violence so that THEY know when to call a Time Out.

Warning Signs and Time-Out


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VERBAL ABUSE
STOP
OK
PROBLEM
PROBLEM SOLVING
TENSION
ARGUMENT
Start looking for your warning signs
Warning signs seen! You're getting out of the box. Verbal abuse and violence lie ahead! When you see your warning signs STOP and take a TIME-OUT!

Crossing the Lines


I don't care what I say line
Warning signs ignored.
Verbal abuse starts.
Anger mounts quickly
I don't care what I do line
Physical acts of abuse start.
Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences.
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. *(*www.continuingedcourses.net/index.php)

For handouts, see last section of this Manual.

Purpose:

To make a safety plan.

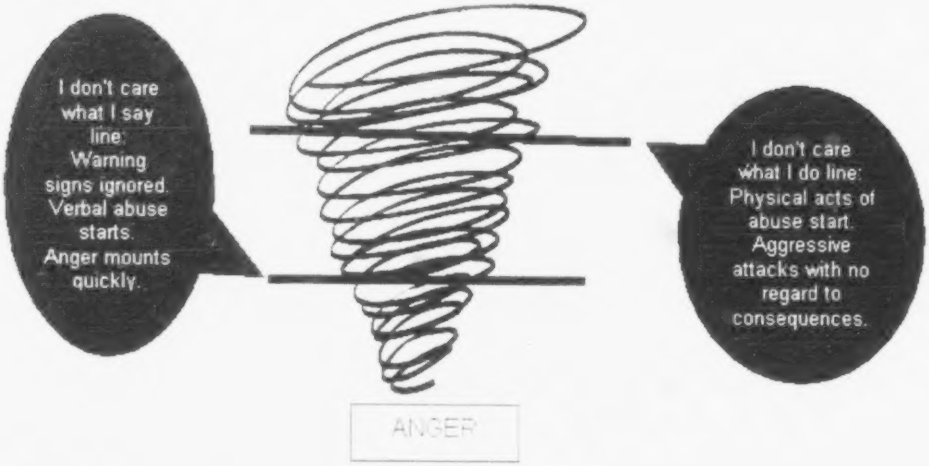
Material:

Handouts 1.4 (Safety Planning for Victims) and 1.5 (Basic Safety Strategy for Victims).

How to do the activity:

- Explain to the group that after having recognized their partners' signs before violence, they have to know what to do and where to go.
- It is possible that some members of the group will have worked on this while attending crisis counseling. This session should help them be more specific about their safety plan.
- Give each person a copy of Handout 1.4 and go over it with the group.

Crossing the Lines


I don't care what I say line: Warning signs ignored. Verbal abuse starts. Anger mounts quickly.
I don't care what I do line: Physical acts of abuse start. Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences.
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. ([illegible])

For handouts, see last section of this Manual.

Purpose:

To make a safety plan.

Material:

Handouts 1.4 (Safety Planning for Victims) and 1.5 (Basic Safety Strategy for Victims).

How to do the activity:

- Explain to the group that after having recognized their partners' signs before violence, they have to know what to do and where to go.
- It is possible that some members of the group will have worked on this while attending crisis counseling. This session should help them be more specific about their safety plan.
- Give each person a copy of Handout 1.4 and go over it with the group.

- Talk about the 4 keys to taking control:
    - Being prepared
    - Thinking clearly (to do this, you simply cannot afford to be impaired)
    - Taking action
    - Believing in oneself
- Tell the group that they should add on handout 1.5 the things they would do and the places they would go to if they felt threatened. Allow 10 minutes to complete this information.
- Ask each person to read what she wrote.
- If a person is indecisive help her think of things to do and places to go.
- Try to involve the group in this exchange as it allows everyone to share ideas and be more specific about their own safety plan.
- At this point, provide Handout 1.5, which is much more specific, and discuss the material on that handout. (You want people to do some thinking on their own on this, but then need to supply them with an outline that better covers all safety factors.) (You will review this in session 3.)
- Discuss the numbers for various caregivers in the community (social services, victim's services, women's shelter, churches, private counselors, etc.) and RCMP telephone numbers so they will know who can help.
- Suggest: copy all emergency numbers and keep them where you can find them quickly. If you have a cordless phone, you might want to keep a copy of the numbers somewhere in the bathroom.
- Discuss how a safety plan can alleviate stress as it gives confidence as to what to do in case one recognizes the signs of coming violence. If they follow through on having a friend keep changes of clothing, etc., it also means they can move quickly to get out of a difficult situation.
- Tell the group to keep their written safety plan in order to be able to look at it when they need to. Stress that it's an essential tool to stay safe. However, they should leave the information on their place of refuge off the copy they take home in case the plan is seen at home.

Session 2

Purpose:

To understand that spousal abuse is any behaviour used to gain or maintain control and power over another person.

To look at the different kinds of spousal abuse and forms of abusive behaviour.

How to do the activity:

Definition of spousal abuse

- Ask each person what she thinks "spousal abuse" really is. List definitions on flipchart.
- Write on a flipchart the following definition (comprises all the elements of spousal abuse) and explain each element of it:

Spousal abuse is any verbal or physical act intended to harm, injure or inflict pain on another person to establish dominance and control over that person.

Spousal abuse comes in many forms and comes from both men and women against their partners.

Stress that abuse is a matter of choice; a person can decide not to be abusive and not establish dominance and control over another person. Emphasize that abuse is not ingrained and that a person does not have to be abusive.

"You choose to abuse, and you can choose NOT to abuse."

Kinds of abuse:

Explain that spousal abuse can take many forms and is not limited to physical abuse. Stress that it is important to look at the different kinds of abuse and forms of behaviour in order to know when abuse is happening. Abusive behaviour can be hidden. Or, as is the case in much Elder abuse, the victim does not even realize it is abuse.

To get people thinking about this, just brainstorm – ask participants to come up with different kinds of abuse without "guiding" them. If they list forms or examples of abuse, write those down also. You are just trying to obtain input from the group and trying to get them to think about this. Try for a back and forth exchange.

You can go back and put the type of abuse (physical, emotional/verbal, spiritual, sexual, financial, etc.) beside each example they suggest, but do that after the following activity.

List on different flipcharts (heading of the flipchart) the following kinds of abuse and explain each of them:

- Physical abuse: any forceful of violent physical action that can take various forms and does not necessarily result in physical injury (the injury is not always visible but it is there). Physical abuse hurts the body.
- Emotional and verbal abuse: hurtful and angry words that bring about fear and degradation. This type hurts the emotions.
- Spiritual abuse: comments or acts which attack who a person is, including one's culture and beliefs. It affects the identity and how a person feels about herself.
- Sexual abuse: any forced sexual act, and unwanted or disrespectful sexual touch. This demeans and humiliates, making a person feel ashamed.
- Financial abuse: controlling the family money so a person must ask for everything or using money as a leverage to get something or to make a person do something. This makes a person feel small or worthless.
- Elder abuse: controlling behaviour directed at an older person. Much Elder abuse is financial (as in children taking pension cheques or using parents' ATM cards, but all the other kinds of abuse can be directed at Elders as well.

- Child abuse: controlling behaviour directed at a child. All the types of abuse apply here. It is important to know that child abuse is dealt with under not only the Family Law Act (which is Nunavut legislation) but also the Child Welfare Act, which is national, not territorial, and that social workers of all kinds are bound by the terms of this Act.

Ask people to mention specific behaviours (actions) they think are abusive and ask them to relate these to a kind of abuse (a behaviour can be put in more than one category).

You can either use your former list, provided by the participants, and put the kind of abuse next to the example, or create a new list under each specific kind.

Keep these flipcharts for future sessions of this group.

Exercise:
Defining Abuse

Provide Handout 2.1 (Defining Abuse)

Go through this handout so participants know what is expected of them and then allow time (10- 15 minutes) for them to think of at least one specific act of abuse, and take it apart, applying what they now know to help understand what has happened.

They should fill out the handout. They should not expect to understand WHY, just what has happened.

At this point, it is also unlikely that they will be able to say how it could be prevented or how they can protect themselves, but this is a start.

Using a flipchart, go over what they have written. You can ask for volunteers to offer their material, writing it on the chart. Once a couple of people have spoken, it gets easier for the others.

Purpose:

To show how spousal abuse can hurt a victim in very different ways.

How to do the activity:

- Hang the Session 1 flipcharts on the wall. These will show different types of abuse and different types of abusive behaviour mentioned by the group.
- Ask people how they think each type of abuse can hurt a victim. This can be difficult for some people. Give them sufficient time to express themselves.

You can help the group by writing the following on a flipchart:

- ➢ Physical abuse: hurts the body.
- ➢ Emotional and verbal abuse: hurts the emotions, makes a person feel worthless.
- ➢ Spiritual abuse: affects a person's identity and feelings about self.
- ➢ Financial abuse: takes away resources and pride, and makes a person totally dependent, makes a person feel "trapped", financially without options.
- ➢ Sexual abuse: demeans, humiliates and makes a person feel shameful about one's sexuality.

"Bucket" analogy: Let's think of yourself as a bucket. Before anything bad happens in your life, your bucket is full of self-esteem, confidence, and positive things. (Note to Counselor, write all on the flipchart or board, then strike out (or erase) what you would "remove" in this analogy.)

Here are a few of the things in your bucket:

Love
Hate
Freedom
Sense of being in prison
Courage
Fear
Trust
Lack of trust
Self confidence
Lack of confidence
Happiness
Sadness
Security
Uncertainty
Delight
Anger
Caring
Indifference
Spirit
Self-hate

Someone (a person you trust) comes along and starts taking the positive things from your bucket, leaving only the negative things.

After a while, what is left? Can you function?

Open discussion:

- All those who want to can share stories about how different types of abuse have hurt them.
- Don't push anyone to talk, as it can be very emotional, and difficult for individuals to start talking about this. Use pauses to let people know they can think and then talk.

Purpose:

To show how spousal abuse can hurt children.

Materials:

VCR, TV and video "Reflections from the heart of a child".

How to do the activity:

- Tell participants they should watch the video, keeping in mind the different types of abuse, and will list those afterwards.
- Watch the video "Reflections from the Heart of a Child" (30 minutes).
- Have the group identity the different kinds of abuse they saw in the video: physical, emotional and verbal, and financial. Write them on a flipchart.

- Have a group discussion about the video. You can ask the following questions:
- What are some of the effects of Sean's violent behaviour on his family?
- The children react to their father's behaviour in very different ways by taking on distinct roles.
  - What role does Emrna play?
  - Ryan?
  - Molly?
  - How does Jenny try to cope with her family situation?
  - Why do you think she stayed with Sean?
  - How do you think the future of Jenny, Emma, Ryan and Molly will be impacted by Sean's behaviour?

Further open discussion:

- What effects do you think your situation is having on your children?
- Are you seeing behavioural difficulties in your kids that concern you?
- There is ample evidence that children that witness or are involved in family violence are much more likely to be abusive when they grow up.

Purpose:

To talk about the bad feelings that can result from spousal abuse.

How to do the activity:

1. Explain that a person can have bad feelings about herself without knowing why and that some of these bad feelings can be the result of spousal abuse.
2. Write the questions below on a flipchart:
   - Ask the questions one at a time.
   - Ask people to talk about what they think and how they feel about each question. Allow each person to express her feelings fully.
     - Do you feel like you're apologizing or saying "Sorry" all the time?
     - Do you feel that you can never do anything right?
     - Do you ever feel that you are dumb, stupid and a bad mother or wife?

- Do you ever feel that you might be crazy?
- Do you ever wish you were dead?
- Do you ever feel afraid to give your own opinions?
- Does it feel like you're always trying to figure out why he's so upset or angry?
- Do you ever feel that if you were doing things differently, he would not be violent?
- Do you feel bad for him and believe it's okay for him to take out his anger on you?

3. Explore for other feelings related to abuse and the climate of abuse in the home.
4. Add to list on flip chart.
5. Let the group know these feelings are not unusual, and okay to have these feelings, as they are some of the effects of abuse.

You are not alone.
Others have gone before.
Some have gone through the darkness into light.
You can, too.
It takes a lot of work, but you can do it.

Purpose:

To talk about the feelings of anger that can result from spousal abuse.

How to do the activity:

- Explain that some people have deep feelings of anger when they have been abused and that it's okay to be angry.
- IMPORTANT: Tell the group that:
  - If a person doesn't admit her anger, it will not go away.
  - A person who doesn't deal with the anger can turn it against herself, be sad and blame herself.

- Open discussion: Have an open discussion about the feelings of anger the group may have.

Caution the group: the things that will be discussed are confidential and information should stay within the group. They would not like details about their relationship shared, so all must agree to keep all this in their hearts, not on their lips.

- Reassure them: Stress that it's safe to share these feelings with the group and that talking about them will help. They will see that they are NOT ALONE, and this often helps.
- To help people verbalize, you can ask the following questions (write them on a flipchart):
  - What stops a person from letting the anger out?
  - What does anger do to a person?
  - How can feelings of anger affect the way a person treats her children?
  - What can be the long time effect of feelings of anger?

Encourage each person to express her feelings fully. It may also help to confirm with others – "Do you feel this way?" "Do you?"

Next session:

If you take your written safety plan home, bring it with you to the next session. If you have not developed one, please do so by the next session.

Session 3

Purpose:

To introduce the concept of a Time Out, how it is used and what it can do.

The Counselor introduces the subject:

In the abusers' program, participants have spent quite a bit of time discussing the use of a Time Out. You may have heard about this, and it may have already been used, but you need more details.

Time Outs are introduced as a tool for abusers to stop them from escalating to violence and to provide both partners a chance to cool off and think out the problem. Here's what is taught in the Abusers' Program:

How to call a Time Out: (Abuser's Program):

1. When you experience tension building, say, "I need a Time Out". Do this calmly, but firmly.
2. Tell your partner you will be back in about an hour.
3. Leave the house.
4. Walk or go someplace where you can calm down and think about what to do to avoid abusing.
5. Concentrate on getting control of your emotions, defining the problem that needs solving, and resolving to deal with it without fighting.
6. Do not do anything that raises your level of tension, like driving a car or playing contact sports or violent video games.
7. If you need to talk to someone, make sure it is someone who knows just what a Time Out is and what it is meant to do. This person should be someone you have discussed with the Counselor. Don't just go to a relative or a friend.
8. If you need to do so, write down what approach you think you should take to deal with this without your anger getting out of control.
9. Take an hour.

10. When you've calmed down, either return or check with your partner to see if you both can agree to resume the discussion without anger.
11. Then go home.

To the Counselor: Suggestions for how to discuss the concept with the participants in the Victims' Program:

Ask the group members:

- In sports, what is a "Time Out"?
  You are looking for something like: "Someone asks, and everything stops so something can be done."
- What is it used for?
  Looking for: "To stop an activity before it develops into a problem, and give everyone time to think."
- How do you call for a "Time Out"?
  Listen for: "Stop everything" or "Say 'I want a Time Out'."
- Is the abuser the only one who can call a Time Out?
  Listen to see what participants say on this.

The Counselor's summary can be: "No, anyone can call it." But, the rules need to be discussed between both partners BEFORE they are angry."

And: "If you have not discussed Time Outs with your partner, do so now. Make sure that all is peaceful, and say something like, 'We learned about Time Outs in group. This sounds like a good idea – what did they tell you about it?'"

Then tell the participants: "Once the subject is opened, you can go ahead and discuss how the Time Out should work."

1. When to call a Time Out? Call it when you see that tensions are growing and when you start to see warning signs in yourself or your partner. Either can call it, both should honor it.
2. Distinguish Time Out from "Storming Out" –
   - When you take a Time Out, you say that is what you need, you get acceptance or at least awareness from your partner, and you leave in a very controlled fashion.
   - ·"Storming out" involves slammed doors, angry words, no planning.
   - They are VERY different. One helps solve problems, and the other adds to them.

TIME OUT CARD

Your *warning signs* mean, "I need a time out." Leave for a minimum of one hour, then return. If you will be away longer, call partner and advise.

No alcohol, no drugs, no driving, no weapons.

Walk, breath deeply, and self-talk (self-calming, decide what you will say to deal with the problem without anger).

Check your own warning signs before returning. If you are ok, return home or call partner to see how she is feeling. If she is ok, return home. If she's not, ask if she wants a further time out.

When you return, check in, let partner know you are back.
If all is ok, resume discussion like adults.

If it escalates, take another time out.

3. What are the rules of a Time Out? See box above for what is taught in the abusers program.
4. How does it apply to me?
   - You can call a Time Out, but it is best if your partner does, as that means he has assessed his warning signs. However, if he doesn't call one, you do it.

  - If he calls one, honor it gracefully. Say, "Ok, I could use one, too. About an hour, hey?"

5. Use the time well:
   - Calm yourself (put on some soothing music)
   - Have tea.
   - Send the kids to a friend's home if they have been in the house.
   - Concentrate on controlling your emotions if they were getting out of hand.
   - Think about the problem, try to define it, think about solving it as a team, think about not blaming, and write down several solutions you think might work.
   - Be ready to compromise.
   - Greet your returning partner with a smile.

Suggestion: Tell participants to keep track of when the Time Out was used in their relationship. Keep notes as to:

- The date, how the problem started, if either partner was impaired when the problem occurred.
- If using the Time Out helped.
- How it helped.
- If the feeling was different when the partner returned.

If a Time Out is used, bring it up in the group the next time we meet.

Purpose:

Review and help participants further develop their safety plans. Make sure everyone has brought their safety plan, and has it in front of them.

Exercise:

Safety Plan review

You might think this is repetitious, but safety plans are so important that we need to make sure everyone is OK with their plan. (Review Handout 1.5, A Basic Safety Strategy)

Discuss with the whole group the importance of the safety plan that each person may have established during individual counseling. As they learn more about themselves through the group sessions, they should review their plan to check if:

- The signals or warnings they have identified in themselves and their partners are still correct (type of events, feelings, physical changes).
- That they know how to sense when things are getting out of hand with their partners.
- That their planned “time out” is detailed enough so they know where to go, what to do, whom to talk to.
- That their safety escape plan (not Time Out plan but the plan to allow them to escape if things get bad) is thoroughly detailed and that they have communicated with a friend and have all emergency systems in place, clothing and keys at a friend's house, emergency numbers accessible, extra outer clothing accessible outside their house.

Throughout the rest of the counseling program, ask the group to keep track of:

- When they used their safety plan (date, how problem started, if either partner was impaired when the problem occurred).
- Who initiated the Time Out.
- If using the Time Out or a safety plan helped them.
- How it helped.
- Was it long enough to allow both partners to cool down?
- Did they do the right activities to help them calm down?
- Did they manage to talk to their designated “support” people?
- Was this talking helpful?

Handout:

Relationship Rules (RR)#1, Rules 1 - 5

Introduce this concept by telling the group that, luckily, people have worked out some rules for relationships that usually work to improve things. These have been defined by Psychology Today magazine, and posted on a website. Pass the handouts around. Both groups will be getting these.

You will be providing these as handouts, one at a time. Suggest that people take these home and put them on the refrigerator, and then discuss them, not only with their partner, but also with their children if they are old enough.

Read through the first handout, discussing the rules as you go. Ask for comments. At this point, participants may not be able to say much about these, but that should change. There are 25 rules, and you will provide them one section at a time, over several weeks.

Session 4

Purpose:

To learn about myths: untrue beliefs shared by many people. These often appear as "excuses" for violent behaviour.

Materials:

VCR, TV and video "One Hit Leads to Another".

Show the video "One Hit Leads to Another" before starting discussion of this topic. Tell the participants to look for examples of types of abusive behaviour and for "excuses" for violent behaviour in the video.

Discussion:

Ask the clients to:

- Identify some of the types of abuse they see in these stories.
- Identify and list some of the "excuses" they see being used in this video.

Activity:

- Break the group in teams (2, 3 or 4 depending on the size of the group).
- Make a flipchart for each team with 3 or 4 different sentences (myths/excuses mentioned below). Ask each team to talk about whether each sentence you wrote is true or false and why. Allow 15 minutes for this discussion.
- Ask each team to report to the group.
- Talk about the first team's answers. Correct any wrong answer and explain why. Repeat this with the other teams.
- Ask the group:
- Are there other myths (or excuses for violent behaviour) that were not mentioned? What are they?
- What effects do these have on a victim?
- What can we do to get rid of these myths? Or, how can we deal with the excuses?

Myths or Excuses vs. Truths:

- Myth/Excuse: Alcohol (or drugs) causes a person to beat another person.
- Truth: Alcohol or drugs are not in themselves is not the cause of violence. The alcohol just loosens a person to a point where the person can act on the violent thoughts, which existed before the person got drunk. Drinking allows a person not to take responsibility for an action and blame the "booze". The effects of different drugs are so diverse that you can't generalize about them. Some definitely can cause aggression.

- Myth/Excuse: A person who is beaten deserves it; she asked for it.
- Truth: No person deserves to be beaten, no matter what kind of person they are. Saying that she caused the violence or asked for it, is an excuse not to take responsibility for the violent act.

- Myth/Excuse: Only a certain kind of person gets beaten.
- Truth: Spousal abuse can happen to anyone. It doesn't matter if a person has a high or low income, or what culture, race, or community she is from.

- Myth/Excuse: Abuse is usually the result of an argument that got out of hand.
- Truth: An argument that ends in abuse is a power struggle an abuser is determined to win. To call it an argument that somehow got out of hand only justifies violence and bullying.

- Myth/Excuse: A person who is abused doesn't leave so it's not that bad.
- Truth: Often, a person who is abused hopes that the abuser will change and that the violence will stop. For some persons, it's impossible to leave, as there is no place to go and no money to live on. For others, they are afraid to be killed if they leave.

- Myth/Excuse: A person who is abused doesn't talk about it, so it's not that bad.
- Truth: A person may not talk about it for a number of reasons. The person thinks that she and the kids will be in more danger if someone knows about the abuse. The person can also feel ashamed or embarrassed. Sometimes, the person has come to the conclusion that she is responsible for the use of violence. The person can think that the community wishes that a family must be kept together.

- Myth/Excuse: A person is abusive because he has problems, or no jobs or his culture has been taken away.
- Truth: These are all excuses. Some persons have problems and have also lost their culture and yet do not beat others.

- Myth/Excuses: Men fight more than women because of their sex drives and hormones.
- Truth: Sex drive does not cause violence. There is proof that violence in the family is learned from others. Spousal abuse is about power, control and being the boss over everyone in the family.

- Myth/Excuse: A person who is abusive is "Isumaluktuq" (incapable of thinking properly).
- Truth: This is another excuse. A person is capable of thinking and deciding not to be abusive. However, that person has not yet made that decision.

- Myth/Excuse: A person who beats a partner is not a danger to the community.
- Truth: An abusive person will seldom attack someone outside his relationship or family. In that sense such person is not a danger to the community. However, when a person beats another, people can try stopping the beating and in the process be attacked. Police officers can be

hurt or killed trying to stop a violent act. Also, children who witness violence often become violent themselves as adults, so this does impact the community.

- Myth/Excuse: Extreme physical violence between partners is usually a rare occurrence.
- Truth: Ignoring a single beating is dangerous. Attacks usually become worse.

- Myth/Excuse: Women should be submissive to men, it is part of our culture.
- Truth: This may or may not have been true or partially true in the past within the Inuit culture, but it certainly is not true now. Partners share equally in responsibilities for their partnership and for raising their children.

Are there other excuses you have heard? Used? Anyone want to add to this list?

“Relationships Rules” handouts:
Ask what they felt about these and how they were received at home. Don’t supply the second one yet. It’s important that the first stay up for a couple weeks so it gets discussed.

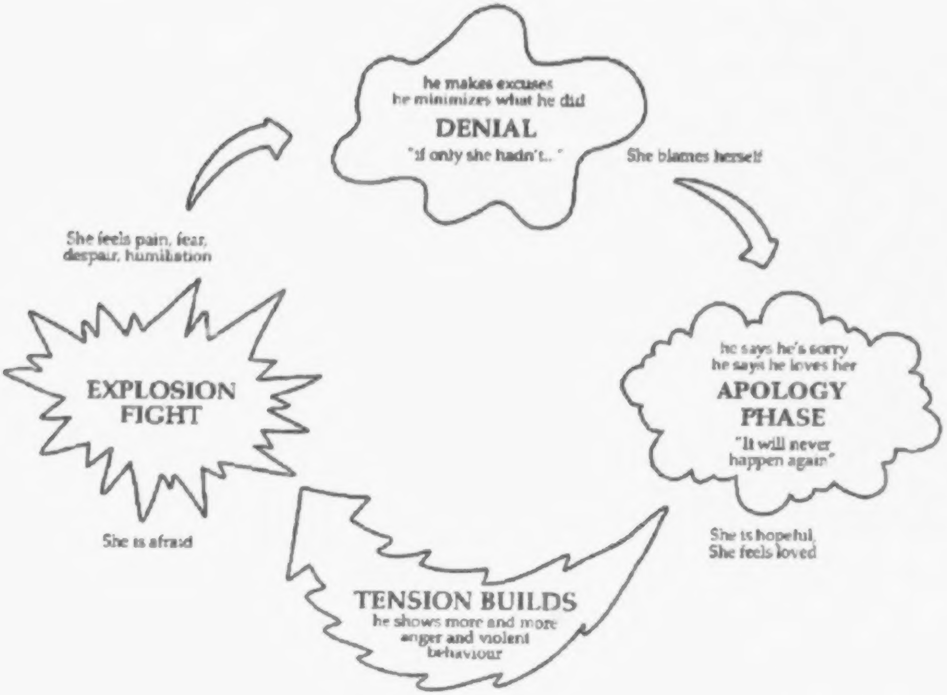
Session 5

Purpose:

To show how the cycle of violence works (it goes in circles and repeats itself).

How to do the activity:

Draw the following on a flipchart and explain the phases of violence: tension building, violence, and apology (sometimes called the "honeymoon phase" or "making up"). Explain that there can be a denial phase after the violence.


he makes excuses
he minimizes what he did
DENIAL
"if only she hadn't.."
She blames herself
he says he's sorry
he says he loves her
APOLOGY PHASE
"It will never happen again"
She is hopeful.
She feels loved
TENSION BUILDS
he shows more and more anger and violent behaviour
She is afraid
EXPLOSION FIGHT
She feels pain, fear, despair, humiliation

The cycle can cover a long or short period of time

The violence usually gets worse

The apology or "honeymoon" phase will eventually disappear

Distribute Handout 5.1, which is the graphic above.

- Stress that over a period of time, the violence usually gets worse and the apology ("honeymoon") phase gets shorter and shorter, while the tension building and violent stages get longer and longer. Denial also appears and can be quite long.
- Give each person a copy of handout 5.2 (Cycle of Violence stories). Ask a different person to read each of the four short stories. After each story, ask the group to guess which part of the cycle each story represents (first: apology or "honeymoon"; second: tension building; third: violence; fourth: denial).
- Depending on the group size and dynamics, you could do role-plays instead of having the stories read.

Stories:

Phases of the Cycle of Violence (Handout 5.2)

Read the following stories and see if you can determine which stage applies to each. The stages are: Apology ("honeymoon") phase, Tension-building phase, Violence (explosive) phase, Denial phase.

First story

A family is at home. The husband comes in with candy for the kids. He makes tea for his wife and is telling her he loves her and is sorry for hitting her. He says he will never do it again. He says he is going to quit drinking. He gives his wife some money to go to the bingo. He tells the kids he is never going to hit their mom again.

Second story

The family is at Grandma's for dinner. The husband is pacing up and down. He is very restless. He tells the kids to shut up or go outside. The wife is with her mother in the kitchen and is very nervous. The husband goes into the kitchen and yells at his wife, "When is that damn dinner going to be ready?" Grandma says, "It's almost ready". The husband says, "I wasn't talking to you." He stomps back into the living room and sits on the couch looking very angry.

Third story

The family is walking home from Grandma's. The husband says, "How come you can't cook like your mother?" The wife is walking with her head down, the kids are getting nervous. The husband says, "I asked you a question, bitch, you're too stupid to learn how to cook, aren't you? Say it! Say, "I'm too stupid to learn." The wife says very quietly under her breath, "I'm not stupid." The husband says, "What did you say?" He grabs her by the hair and slaps her face. The kids run home so they can hide before their parents get there.

Fourth story

The family is at home. The wife sits at the table with her head in her hands. The husband stands over his wife and says, "Why do you always talk back? You know it makes me mad." Grandma comes in and sends the kids outside. The husband leaves and Grandma sits down at the table. She takes her daughter's hand and says, "That's the way men are, just try not to make him mad. Here, I brought over some dry fish he likes that. You're lucky he has a job. Lots of the other people in town are on welfare."

Purpose:

To understand that abusive behaviour is used to control other people.

How to do the activity:

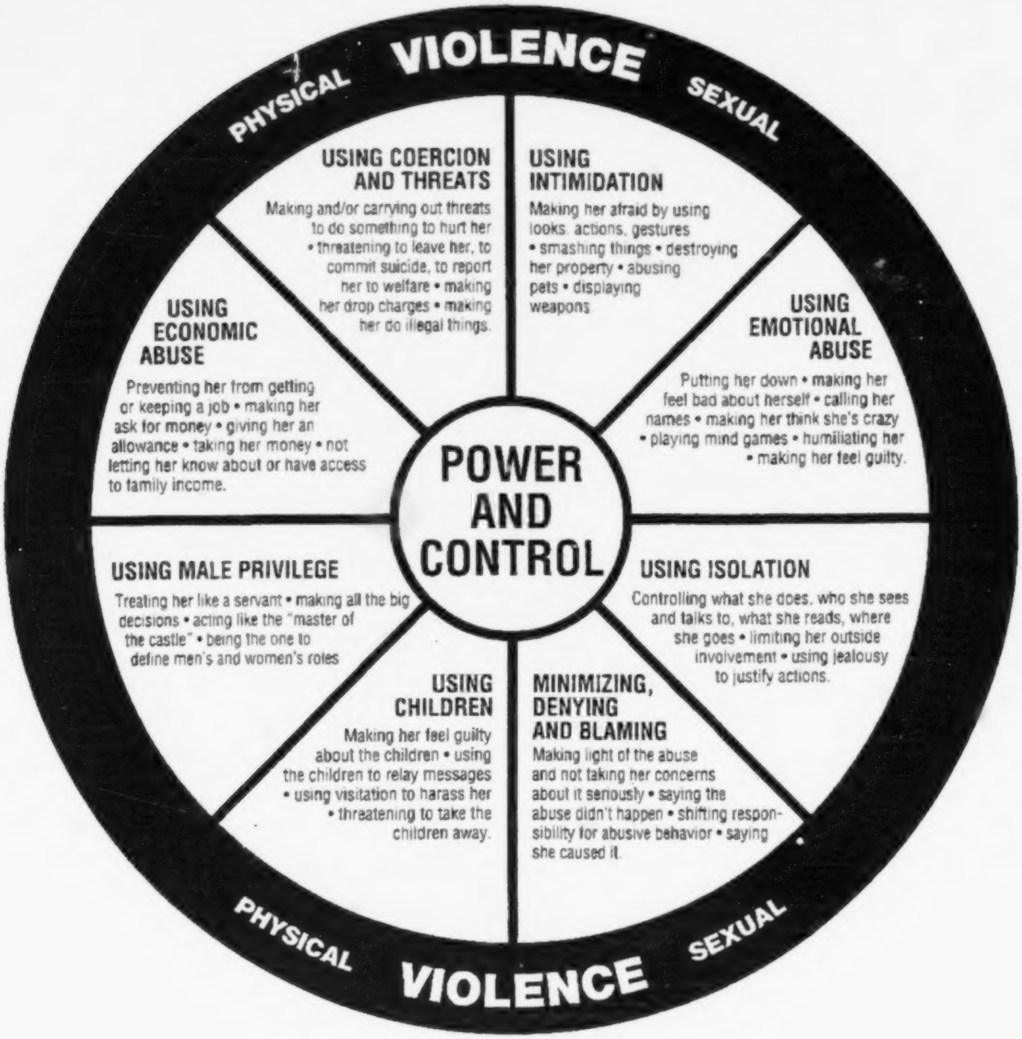
- Ask the group to name things that make a relationship painful.
- Write their answers on a flipchart.
- Ask people to provide examples. They don't have to come from their own experience.
- Hang the copy of Handout 5.3 (Power and Control Wheel) on the wall (keep it for all other sessions as you will probably often refer to it).

- Give each person a copy of Handout 5.3 (Power & Control Wheel)
- Explain the power and control wheel:
  - Each section of the wheel shows different abusive behaviours used to control or gain power.
  - All sections of the wheel are the same size because all forms of abuse are equally damaging. Not one of them is less damaging.
  - "Power And Control" is in the centre because this reflects the fact that abusive behaviour comes from the person's need to be powerful and controlling.
  - "Physical Violence Sexual" is at the rim of the wheel and strengthens the other forms of abuse described in each section of the wheel.
  - Abusive behaviour is like a wheel: it has neither beginning nor end. It also crushes everyone in its path.

Read the text in each section of the wheel.

- You can ask people:
  - Do you relate to this diagram and its contents? Is this a part of your experience?
  - Does it help to name these things out loud?
  - How does it feel to be the one who receives these actions and ways of thinking from another person?
  - Does it help to know that there are others who share your pain, and who also want to work to make the pain stop?

Power and Control Wheel



USING COERCION AND THREATS

Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her • threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges • making her do illegal things.

USING INTIMIDATION

Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures • smashing things • destroying her property • abusing pets • displaying weapons

USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Putting her down • making her feel bad about herself • calling her names • making her think she's crazy • playing mind games • humiliating her • making her feel guilty.

USING ISOLATION

Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING

Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused it.

USING CHILDREN

Making her feel guilty about the children • using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass her • threatening to take the children away.

USING MALE PRIVILEGE

Treating her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

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Session 6

Purpose:

To look at what keeps an abused person in a relationship.

How to do the activity:

Ask each person to give one reason why she (or someone she knows) might stay in an abusive relationship. Write the answers on a flipchart. Allow time for reflection and discussion and encourage discussion.

You can add on the flipchart reasons not mentioned by the group. These could be:

Situation-related factors

The victim:

- Wants the kids to grow up with two parents.
- Has no place to go.
- Has no money.
- Is afraid of being hurt (or killed) or the children being hurt.
- Is afraid of losing the kids.
- Has no skill to find a job and make it on her own.
- Doesn't know what else to do.
- Would leave with nothing, as her partner owns everything.
- Is afraid of making a complaint and going to court.
- Believes that it would be against her religion.
- Is afraid that the family and the community will turn their back on her.
- Has been told by preacher, family, and counselors that it's best to stay and keep the family together.

Emotion-related factors

The victim:

- Feels guilty or ashamed about the failure of the relationship.
- Is insecure about living without emotional support.
- Is afraid of loneliness, of being isolated by the community.

- Is emotionally dependent on her partner.
- Needs to be loved.
- Thinks that her partner will not be able to live without her.
- Responds to her partner's threat of suicide.
- Loves her partner and wants to believe that he will change.
- Believes that her partner needs her and that she can help.
- Fears making major life changes.

Have a group discussion. You can begin with these questions:

- Looking at the list of the reasons why a victim might stay in an abusive relationship, what thoughts do you have?
- Ask if anyone would like to share the reasons why she stayed?
- Refer to the cycle of violence posted on the wall and talk again about how it affects a person who is abused.

Explain that there is always more than one reason and that each case is different.

Session 7

Purpose:

To look at how the community, and one's family, friends and Elders can influence a relationship.

Materials:

VCR, TV and video "Summer in the life of Louisa".

How to do the activity:

- Watch the video "Summer in the Life of Louisa" (25 minutes).
- Have a group discussion about the video.
- To help people, you can ask the following questions:
    - What was Sarah's role?
    - What did Sarah say to Louisa to help her make a decision?
    - What was Louisa's mother's role?
    - What do you think made Louisa decide to do something about her relationship?
    - How did going back to school and having a part time job affected Louisa?
    - What was the Elder's role with Peter?
    - What do you think of Louisa's decision to pursue her relationship with Peter?
    - Ask each person to talk about the influence of family (her family and her partner's family, friends, and Elders on her relationship.

Invite a couple to come in and share....

This should be a couple who have gone through difficult times in their relationship, preferably a couple whose relationship has survived abuse. Emphasize that they need to share only what they want to share with the group, and that they should not feel pressured.

Provide questions ahead of time, and use these questions to guide their discussion with the group.

- How did you meet?
- Tell us a bit about how your relationship developed?
- What role did your families play in supporting or opposing your relationship?
- When did you get married or decide to live together?
- How long after that did problems start to emerge?
- What seemed to trigger these problems?
- Did you share the fact that you were having problems with your families or friends?
- What was the reaction?
- Did they "take sides"? What were you advised to do?
- Did Elders get involved? What was their advice?
- Did you seek counseling for the problems that existed in your relationship? Was this marriage counseling, or another kind?
- Was there a turning point (for the better) in your relationship? What was this turning point and how did it affect your relationship?
- Are things better now?
- What did you each do to help resolve the problems?
- How long has it taken?
- Do you have any advice for members of this group – suggestions as to how to deal with abuse in a relationship?

Suggestions as to how to maintain a NON-abusive relationship?

If the couple are OK with it, allow the group to ask questions. Make sure the couple is reassured that they can say, "We don't want to "go there" with questions if they feel that way.

Session 8

Purpose:

To help with understanding of an Elder's perspective on relationships and how to handle problems.

How to do the exercise:

An Elder from the community will come in during this session and will share insights on the role of the Elders in the community and as advisors to the young people. Plan things out with the Elder in advance so there are no surprises.

(NOTE TO COUNSELOR: Be very careful in picking your Elder, as some still believe a woman should submit to a man in all ways. You do not want to use someone who believes this.)

You want the Elder to talk about how he/she sees the Elders fitting into the community and you would like this person to share some of his/her advice that applies to young people and couples in particular.

The following questions can guide the Elder's part:

- Did the advice of Elders influence YOU when you were young? In what way, or, can you give an example of this? (Example does not have to be a relationship example, can be anything.)
- How did you meet your spouse?
- Was your family involved?
- Was your family supportive?
- Can you share with us some useful advice that was given to you as a young couple?
- Did you disagree with any of the advice given to you and your spouse by Elders?
- What did you do and how did it all work out?
- If they ask you, what advice do you give to young couples that are considering marriage?

- Do today's young people follow that advice?
- If not, why do you think they do not?
- What advice would you give to a couple who are having problems due to the husband wanting complete control over his wife?

Discussion and dialogue:

The participants in the program should take about 30 minutes to ask their own questions of the Elder. Counselor should take notes on the questions asked, and the responses. You may have to go back later and sort this out.

Session 9

Purpose:

To learn that equality and balance can be achieved between partners.

How to do the activity:

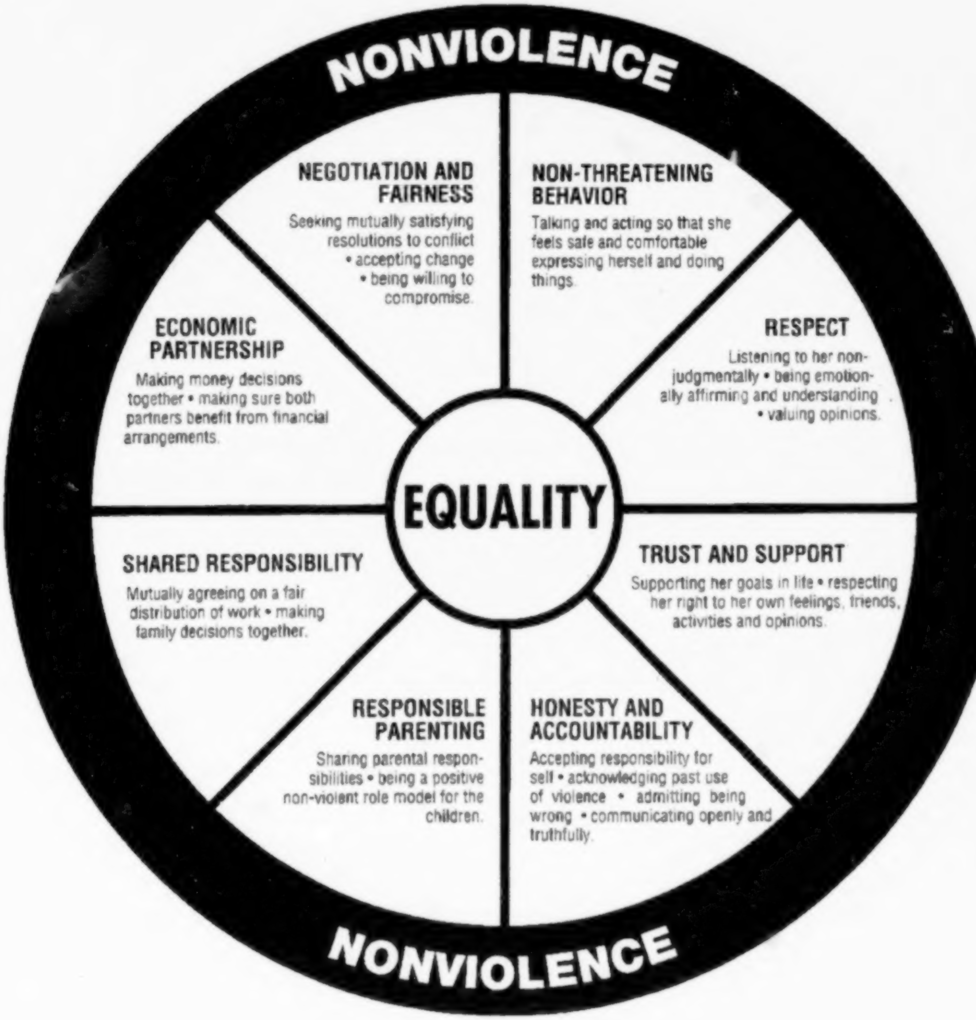
- Hang a copy of handout 9.1 (Equality Wheel) on the wall (keep it for all other sessions as you will probably often refer to it).
- Give each person a copy of handout 9.1
- Explain the Equality Wheel:
    - Each section of the wheel shows different behaviours. These all support the idea of an equal place for each partner.
    - All sections of the wheel have the same size because all aspects of a healthy relationship are equally important.
    - "Equality" is in the centre because it reflects the person's need to be equal, to share control between the partners.
    - "Non-Violence" is at the rim of the wheel as it reinforces and strengthens the other behaviours described in each section of the wheel.
    - Non-violence is like a wheel: it has neither beginning nor end.
- Read the text in each section of the wheel.
- Using the behaviours mentioned in each section of the wheel, ask people to relate to these.
- If possible, try to lead each participant to identify which behaviours seem relevant to the current relationship.
- Probe for aspects of the relationship that indicate there is some equality for both partners.

Handout:

Relationship Rules (RR)#2, Rules 6 - 10.

Pass out the next "Relationship Rules" handout. Ask for comments on how this is working at home. Is anything being discussed? What is their spouse's attitude toward these ideas?

Equality Wheel



NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS

Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict • accepting change • being willing to compromise.

NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR

Talking and acting so that she feels safe and comfortable expressing herself and doing things.

RESPECT

Listening to her non-judgmentally • being emotionally affirming and understanding • valuing opinions.

TRUST AND SUPPORT

Supporting her goals in life • respecting her right to her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions.

HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accepting responsibility for self • acknowledging past use of violence • admitting being wrong • communicating openly and truthfully.

RESPONSIBLE PARENTING

Sharing parental responsibilities • being a positive non-violent role model for the children.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work • making family decisions together.

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Making money decisions together • making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.

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Purpose:

Understanding self-esteem, to help people feel good about themselves and see their own strengths.

How to do the activity:

Have the group sit in a circle.

First part (allow 20 minutes)

- Ask each person to use the first letter of her first or last name and find a word that begins with the same letter and tells something good about her.
- Example: "My name is Rose and I am responsible".
- Go around the circle twice.
- For the second time it could be: "My name is Rose and I am responsible and ready to help".

Second part (allow 30 minutes)

- Write on a flipchart the following headings:
    - Honest
    - Shows respect
    - Can be trusted
    - Responsible
    - Gives support
    - Shares
- Ask each person to decide under what heading to put the 2 good things she has said earlier about herself. Write them on the flipchart and write the person's initial next to the words she has given.
- Ask the group to think of other good things about themselves.
- Examples: What makes them strong? What makes them feel good in their life?
- Go around the circle and ask each person to mention a good thing and choose under which heading it should go. Write the word on the flipchart and write the person's initial next to the words she has given. Go around the circle twice.

Third part (allow 30 minutes)

- Ask people what they felt about saying good things about themselves.

- Go around the circle and repeat to each person the 4 good things she has mentioned about herself.

Homework:

Pass out the handout 9.2 Understanding Self-esteem.

Review with participants. Tell them to try to follow at least two of the "tips" before the next session.

Session 10

Purpose:

To show that it is possible to move from an abusive relationship to a healthy one. A woman from the community who has managed this change will share her experience with the group.

How to do the activity:

Before the session, meet the resource person (such a person must have been identified and briefed as to your expectations and as to her role before the group sessions started) and provide some background information on how the group is doing. In order to assist this person, provide her with this list of questions that she could address with the group.

It may work best to tell her you will ask the questions to help guide her if she wishes.

Examples of questions:

- While the abuse was taking place, was she able to talk about it? If yes, to whom? If no, why? What seemed to stop her from speaking about it?
- While she was the victim of abuse, did she treat her kids differently? How? Since her relationship is healthier, how does it affect her kids?
- What does she think caused the change (for the better) in her relationship with her partner?
- Have she and her partner changed the way they relate to each other (sharing, talking, etc.)? In what way?
- When tension builds between her and her partner, what does she do now?
- Was her self-esteem affected by the abuse? How? What did she do about it?
- Does she think that someone can move from an abusive relationship to a healthy one?
- What (if anything) can the abused partner do to help bring about this change? How long does it take?
- How does she feel today? How does she see the future?

Try to have the person present at the beginning of the session and introduce her to the group. Being present at the beginning of the session could help the person have an idea of the group's dynamics.

The group can ask questions as the resource person talks about her experience or at the end of the presentation. Choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Encourage a dialogue, and don't hurry this session. Let the resource person talk freely with participants.

Session 11

Purpose:

To understand basic principles of communication.

How to do the activity:

Write the principles mentioned below on a flipchart. Go over each principle and explain how important it is to understand it in order to communicate effectively with someone and be sure that the message corresponds to one's intention.

Ask the group to talk about personal experiences that involved these principles. You can use the examples mentioned below to help the group identify these experiences.

The message sent is not always the message received.

We usually think that if someone doesn't understand what we say that it is that person's fault. In fact, the one who sends the message can do it in such a way that the message doesn't correspond to his/her intention. If this happens, the person who receives it can get mixed messages, and becomes confused. Example:

Q. You're home late today!	Intention: Did you have a tough day?
A. I had to finish something for work, is that a problem?*	Reaction: she always wants to control me

*In this case, it's not so much the answer "I had to finish something…", but the aggressive "Is that a problem?" that can cause anger to start. Even stopping, and making this into two different sentences, with a pause between, can help, and body language can speak volumes. Just insert an "I'm sorry" before "is that a problem" and most concerns would be met.

It is impossible NOT to communicate. Body language speaks loudly.

Whatever a person does, communication happens. Being silent, snorting, turning away, glaring at someone -- all these are examples of communication. Just take the Inuit "yes" and "no" as a perfect example, and even these tiny movements can express far more than a simple "yes" or "no", just in the way they are done and the expression that accompanies the eyebrow or nose movement. It is always better to clarify, by speaking your feelings of displeasure, annoyance, frustration, or irritation rather than expressing them only in body language. However, it is important to do this in a constructive way rather than just lashing out. If your concerns are spoken, there is less chance you will be misunderstood.

Every message has content, and it has feeling.

If the content is different from the feeling expressed, the person who receives the message will be confused.

Example: A mother lectures her son about how bad it is not to listen to a teacher or to skip school. At the same time she smiles at him and pats his head. The son will inevitably be confused as to what his mother really means. She's telling him it's not ok to skip school, but giving him clues that it IS ok or that she doesn't mean this.

Non-verbal cues are more believable than verbal ones.

The inflection of the voice, body language, and nonverbal cues can give a totally different meaning to the content of a message.

Example: Saying to a partner who arrives home late after a hockey game, "How come you are late?" could mean: "I wonder if you were having fun and stayed a little longer with friends" or "I have been waiting for you and you didn't care", or, it can even convey that you thought he was with another woman. It all depends on body language and emphasis on words.

Take care not only how you say something, but how you look when you say it.

Example 2: Saying to a partner who arrives home late after a day on the land "You're so late!" could mean: "What happened to you, I was afraid for you" or "I have been waiting for you and you didn't care".

The looks exchanged definitely matter; a hug could make all the difference.

And, you can head off the problem.

And, if you are the one that's late, there's a lot of difference if you come in and explain your lateness before your partner asks. Here's where a little apology, which doesn't cost you much, can save a lot of grief! How about: "Hey, I'm sorry I'm late, but Ann's skidoo wouldn't start, and we had to walk."

Session 12

COUPLES COUNSELING SESSIONS

At this point, two sessions on couples counseling (conjoint therapy) will be incorporated into the counseling program.

- Individual sessions for couples will run about an hour per session.
- If the sessions are for two or more couples, they will likely be longer, up to two hours.

This counseling may be done as individual couples with both counselors present, or as pairs of couples, or as a small group of couples. It may be done during the same week as group sessions (but at a different time from the groups) or may be done instead of group sessions for a week.

The decision on how to handle this must be left up to the counselors – if the group is large or problems are intense, it may make sense to suspend group sessions for a week and schedule all the couples' sessions into every available time slot. If holidays are approaching and the counselors are concerned about the stability of the group, it may make sense to offer couples counseling without suspending the group meetings. The important thing is that the Counselors feel free to deal with this based on their intuition and knowledge of the present group dynamics.

Session 13

COUPLES COUNSELING SESSIONS (Second set of sessions)

At this point, two sessions on couples counseling (conjoint therapy) will be incorporated into the counseling program.

- Individual sessions for couples will run about an hour per session.
- If the sessions are for two or more couples, they will likely be longer, up to two hours.

This counseling may be done as individual couples with both counselors present, or as pairs of couples, or as a small group of couples. It may be done during the same week as group sessions (but at a different time from the groups) or may be done instead of group sessions for a week.

The decision on how to handle this must be left up to the counselors – if the group is large or problems are intense, it may make sense to suspend group sessions for a week and schedule all the couples' sessions into every available time slot. If holidays are approaching and the counselors are concerned about the stability of the group, it may make sense to offer couples counseling without suspending the group meetings. The important thing is that the Counselors feel free to deal with this based on their intuition and knowledge of the present group dynamics.

Handout:

Relationship Rules (RR)#3, Rules 11 – 16.

Ask how this is going over at home. Probe for whether the partner has brought any of these home and if they are indeed displayed. (If the partner has NOT brought these home or discussed them, be sure to mention this to the Counselor dealing with the abusers' group.

Ask if members of the group have questions, whether people disagree, concerns.

Session 14

Purpose:

To learn some communication skills to work toward a healthier relationship.

How to do the activity:

Basic concept: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Generally, we learn this concept early in life, but many fail to understand or apply it.

Key to this is the concept of trying to look at things from the other person's point of view before acting. Then, to try to treat everyone as you would like to be treated. People crave respect, approval of others, friendship, and love. If you keep this constantly in mind, it can change the way you act towards everyone. Mutual respect is very important in a relationship.

Discuss each skill listed below (expressing feelings will be dealt specifically in session 16).

Listening:

- Is there is a difference between hearing (receiving information) and listening (getting involved)? What is that difference? (Difference is understanding, seeing that point of view, having sympathy, and caring.)
- What would you expect from a best friend if you were talking to them about a personal problem? Full attention? Encouragement to give the whole story? Questions? Acknowledgment by the friend that he/she understands the problem? Caring rather than judging? Eye contact and a response to what you say?
- Play the "rumour" game. The group sits in a circle. The Counselor has a sentence ready, written down. Counselor whispers it to the next person and asks her to pass it on. At the end, the Counselor asks the last person to recite what she heard (usually the sentence said by the first person is very

different from the one the last person recites). The, the Counselor reads out the sentence so they can see what the original was.

Example of a sentence that could be used: "James' wife went to the health centre to see if she was pregnant, she met Keith on the way."

Lesson learned: Rumours are easy to start, usually end up totally different, changing many times along the way. Talking to people one by one usually results in separation and lack of understanding of the original problem, and almost always in misunderstanding and untruths.

Validation: (Checking up)

Validation means that a person shows that he does not necessarily agree with another person's opinion but still respects it. It's a way to check to see if you are understood or understanding or to open a door for the person to talk.

Example:

- STATEMENT: – "My boss was on my back all day! He checked everything I did! He doesn't trust me, and I could just kill him!"
- ANSWER 1 - "You are crazy to think about doing a thing like that!"
- ANSWER 2 - "It must be difficult to deal with a boss like that. Better not kill him though. Why don't we talk about what other things you could do?"

Sometimes it is as simple as: "You seem kind of quiet – is everything OK? Any way I can help?"

Positive expressions: (Good feelings)

This works both ways, and will also be covered in detail in the abuser's counseling program.

When was the last time you said something nice to your partner?

Positive expressions between partners are very important, like affection and caring, praise and compliments, and expression of appreciation. Every person needs to feel appreciated, to be complimented and to receive affection. If you think that your partner knows how you feel so you don't have to say anything, you are dead wrong! This does not make the partner appreciated. If it is sincere, praising, complimenting and showing one's appreciation will almost always lead a partner to respond with similar expressions.

Expression of negative feelings: (Bad feelings)

It's not easy to express negative feelings but it's always better than not expressing them. Think about how you usually express negative feelings.

As you get angry, don't let the negative feeling get bigger than it needs to.

Focus on your partner's behaviour and what is upsetting you about that behaviour and NOT on his personality (Never say "You are stupid/it was a stupid thing to do!", but express how you feel: "I'm upset, because ...").

"Never, never, NEVER use "You always......" This will always increase the emotion and negative feelings on the part of the person to whom it is directed.

With children, you may find this helps: "We always love you, but we don't always like some of the things you do. You just can't keep hitting your little brother like this."

Counselor: Ask the group how they would express negative feelings. Search for the following answers: don't hold on to your feelings, focus on how the message is being sent and express how you feel: "I feel ...because you..." or "I feel upset because...can we discuss this when we are calmer".

How to ask: (Making requests)

Each of us asks many things from each other every day. The way the request is made can convey authority and control, or it can convey cooperation, respect and love.

How do you request something from your partner?

TRY THIS:

- Be prompt (don't wait and become irritated), don't assume the partner knows what you want, and wait and wait, getting more upset. Ask before you get upset.
- If something has to be asked at the last minute, be polite: "Gosh, I seem to be behind on this and desperately need your help! Could you......?"
- Say "Please......" Maybe it is not part of the Inuit culture, but it's a useful custom that should be a part of all cultures.
- Use questions, not commands: "Would you mind if.....?" "Could I ask you to help me with......?" "If you have time, could you ....?"
- Be specific about what you need. "I can't get this VCR to work – you're better at this than me, want to give it a try?"
- Avoid the use of "How come you.....?" "Why don't you......?" and the like as these lead to accusation and rebellion.
- Don't forget to be grateful! Say "Thank you!" and mean it.
- Use sincere positive feedback. "I never could do those repairs nearly as well as you can." "Hey, great meal!" "You look really nice today." "You should have heard what little Sam said today – I'm so proud of those kids!"
- Don't be insincere. It will always show.

Exercise: (Role-playing)

Set up some little scenarios and ask participants to pair off and figure out ways to ask kindly. Everyone gets a written note with their "scene", and has 3 minutes to figure it out. One person plays the male partner and the other the female. The male partner should respond as that person thinks he would. Ask each pair to go through their scene and then switch roles and take another scene.

- You would like to go to a sewing group on Wed. night. Your spouse doesn't have anything on Wed. night, but likes to go to hockey on Thursday night. You have two small kids. How do you negotiate this?
- You need a new fishing jigger, and your partner is skilled at making these. You know he wants a new spring jacket. How do you get your jigger?
- You get home from a business trip and find your spouse has cleaned up the house, and even made the kids' beds. What do you do? What do you say?
- Hockey has returned to the world, Jordin's playing, and your spouse wants to watch the game. You usually have a group of friends in for cards on that night. Your partner usually looks after the kids while you play. What could you do?

Reality Check:

Afterwards, ask participants what they thought of the role-playing. Did it make things seem more "real" to them?

Did playing the role of the partner make them think about this from another point of view?

Session 15

Purpose:

To help put feelings into words and to understand how to express them.

How to do the activity:

Putting feelings into words (one hour)

Write each different type of feeling and related words on a flipchart or use a wall chart. Choose one type of feeling, have each person think of a recent situation and match it with one of the words listed for that type. Have each person describe the situation and the feeling.

Do this exercise for as many types of feelings as possible.

Sad	**Happy**	**Scared**	**Confused**	**Hurt**	**Ashamed**	**Guilty**	**Angry**
Unhappy Lonely Depressed Helpless Powerless	Excited Upbeat Glad Joyful Content Relaxed Satisfied Peaceful Calm Confident	Fearful Anxious Frightened Worried Defensive Unsafe Nervous Timid Cautious	Unsure Puzzled Troubled Uneasy	Disappointed Distrustful In pain Suffering	Shameful Embarrassed Worthless	Regretful Remorseful Apologetic	Furious Mad Annoyed Bitter Upset Hateful Resentful

Expressing feelings (20 minutes)

Discuss the following rules to express feelings:

- Always use “I” when expressing a feeling. Don’t use “you” as it could lead the other person to feel he is accused of something. Ex: “I feel angry” and not “You think I feel angry”.
- Express a feeling by a statement and not by a question.

- In order to avoid confusion, express a feeling using the present and in prompt language. Ex: "I feel depressed" and not "It depresses me when".
- Don't use "You make me....", as in "You make me feel angry."
- State how you feel and then ask your partner how she feels. Ex: "I feel great this morning, how do you feel?"

Identifying feelings and expressing them is not easy and needs practice. Stress to the group how important it is to practice this, AND to discuss it with their partners.

Session 16

Purpose:

To show that conflict is normal and is to be expected in a relationship.

How to do the activity:

Write the following statements on a flipchart. Have the group vote true or false to each statement, and discuss answers.

Conflict means something is wrong with me or with my partner	False
Conflict is normal and predictable	True
Conflict comes from difference in perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and attitudes	True
Conflict is not good/bad/right/wrong - it "just is"	True
Conflicts occur because at least one person is "right" and one person is "wrong"	False
Conflicts provide an opportunity to learn and grow	True
Anger is a bad emotion	False
People always get hurt during a conflict	False
It's okay to have a different opinion from my partner	True
All my emotions are okay	True
I have the right to my own opinion, as do others	True
My beliefs and perceptions about conflict do not influence how I deal with conflict	False
Each person is responsible for how she decides to deal with conflict	True
Changing patterns of behaviour can be done in a few weeks	False

Have the group brainstorm as to the main sources of conflicts between partners and write them on a flipchart. They could be:

- Time spent together and closeness (in a relationship with a friend, for example, you can more easily avoid the conflict as you don't actually live with that person).
- Number of tasks that are done together.
- Number of decisions that must be made (financial priority, decisions regarding the children, etc.).
- The desire to influence a partner.

- Age and sex differences. There is a difference in the way men think and the way women think.
- Discussions that take place in the home where there are no moderating influences.
- The necessity to stay together: you cannot resign from your relationship.
- A high level of stressful events.
- Difference in culture and beliefs. There are cultural differences if you are in a cross-cultural marriage. In some cases the very thought processes are different; we process information differently. Full understanding may not happen, but it helps a lot to KNOW that there are differences.

Ask the group for other examples of conflict. Then ask them to think for 5 minutes of ways they could deal with these. Discuss these different ways.

Session 17

Purpose:

To learn ways to handle arguments. Sometimes known as "fair fighting" rules!

How to do the activity:

Write on a flipchart the rules for fair fighting and discuss each rule:

- Fighting by mutual consent – "agree to fight"
- Don't insist on a fight at a time when you or your partner can't handle it. To have a fair fight, you and or partner have to be ready for it.
- Stick to the present; don't dig up the past.
- Don't dredge up past mistakes and faults and don't make statements for the future like: "you will never change".
- Stick to the subject
- Don't throw in every other problem that has no relation to the subject.
- Listen to what your partner has to say
- Use "I", not "you" or especially not "You always…."
- Don't talk about what you think your partner thinks or feels.
- Don't attack your partner
- Don't bring up things that you know your partner is sensitive to; and don't label your partner (alcoholic, stupid, insecure, etc.).
- Take time to try to work things out; compromise.
- Try to end the fight with a compromise that satisfies both partners. If you don't, it will recur. If necessary, take a time-out and come back to the discussion when you are calm.
- Don't try to win, ever!
- If one wins, the other loses and begins to build resentment about the relationship. It destroys rather than builds the relationship.
- Respect tears but don't let them be used to avoid a decision.
- Crying is a valid response to how a man or a woman feels. However, don't let it sidetrack the discussion.
- NEVER use violence

Physical violence goes against all rules of fair fighting. Before you start, make a pact with yourself NOT to be violent. Take a time out if you feel your resolve slipping.

Write on a flipchart the words to use and the ones not to use in fair fighting.

"No" words – DON'T USE THESE	**"Yes" words – YOU CAN USE THESE**
"You never"	"I'm sorry"
"I told you so"	"Please help me"
"You always"	"I did wrong"
"I don't want to discuss it"	"Thank you"
"When will you *ever* learn?"	"I love you"
"How many times do I have to tell you?"	"I appreciate you"
"You always...."	"I respect you"

When there is conflict between you and your partner and a "fight" happens, the objective is to clear the air and express deep feelings in order to build a more unified life together.

Have the group talk about the most recent argument they had with their partners and the way they handled it. Now talk about the way they should have handled it.

Role-playing activities:
The Counselor will set up a role-playing scenario and participants will take different parts and play this out.

How do you handle these conflicts?

Example: There's hockey practice twice a week. Two kids are in hockey, in different teams, so different practice times. The mother is the one who takes the kids 90% of the time. She feels the father needs to be involved.

Example: Parent teacher conferences are coming up. The mother has been to these on a regular basis, and the father has never gone. One child is having problems in school and is skipping school. Both parents know this, and know it will be discussed. The mother feels the father should attend the parent-teacher conference. The father doesn't want to go.

Example: Your kids are playing at a Hockey tournament. Unfortunately, you are a rabid hockey fan and good hockey player. And, you are super competitive. One kid is good, the other is not. You go to the game and end up overreacting, yelling at the "not so good" player and making a scene. Your spouse is upset and embarrassed and your child is crying.

Afterward, discuss what people learned about communication and reactions to what people say.

Handout: Relationship Rules (RR)#4, Rules 17 – 21.
Pass out the next Relationship Rules sheet. Probe for how these are going over at home. If their children are old enough, are they taking any interest in these?

Session 18

Purpose:

To understand how jealousy undermines trust and feeds feelings of insecurity.

How to do the activity:

Explain what jealousy is. It's the suspicion that one's partner is unfaithful. It can also be the fear of being replaced or diminished in importance in the affection of one's partner. Jealousy is one of the leading causes of spousal abuse.

Mention the difference between jealousy and envy. Envy is a feeling of discontent aroused by another's better fortune (not accepting that a person has more money, better clothes, better hunting equipment, or handles kids, parents, or friends better, etc).

Explain that:

- Jealousy can be tied to low self-esteem: a person who has low self-esteem can fear interest her partner shows for another (it can go as far as being jealous of a partner's bond with a best friend).
- Jealousy can also be tied to insecurity. A partner may have lacked a sense of self-confidence before the relationship. He may be anxious, troubled or angry. This may be due to a lack of bonds with friends and family members. Or, someone with problems stemming from childhood neglect or abuse can be vulnerable to jealousy. If a person is terribly insecure, the slightest incidents involving one's partner and the opposite sex can be perceived as threatening to the relationship.

Talk about what jealousy does. Jealousy undermines trust and feeds the feelings of insecurity and fear. A jealous feeling usually isn't logical, and doesn't respond to reasoning. A jealous person usually doesn't readily accept explanations, and constantly seeks evidence of faithfulness. It's usually a fear that comes from one's own insecurity or lack of confidence.

Envy and jealousy can occur together, and this often happens when your partner seems to be flirting with an attractive rival. Since jealousy involves the loss of a relationship, it is usually more intense than envy. The following table may help.

Discuss the differences between jealousy and envy.

Envy	**Jealousy**
Feelings of inferiority, worthlessness	Low self-esteem
Longing or wanting something	Fear of loss of something you have
Resentment of circumstances	Suspicion or anger about betrayal
Ill-will towards envied person plus guilt	Distrust
Disapproval of feelings	Sadness and loneliness
Motivation to improve or change one's own circumstances	Uncertainty
Desire to possess attractive qualities of another	Fear of losing an important person to another

Discuss the following with the group:

If you are the one exhibiting jealousy:

- Many people are faced with unwanted invitations or attention. Some people flirt without meaning to do so. Some people cope with these unwanted invitations by doing nothing, being passive. The only way to know what your partner is really feeling is to talk about it.
- If your partner is very attractive, do you want him to become ugly to allow you to be more secure? Probably not.
- Did you become blind to the opposite sex when you started the relationship? No. Why do you expect your partner to be?
- If your partner has never been unfaithful, 90% of your jealousy comes from your own personal insecurity. Don't blame your partner for it. You can and should express to your partner your own feelings: I am afraid you will get to like her better than me if you see her too much, I get nervous when you talk to this woman, etc. Then listen to what he has to say.

- Have you ever said to your partner: "I trust you… but I don't". That kind of statement can give your partner the impression that you don't think he can make his own decisions or have control of his life.
- Possessiveness is a form of jealousy. A partner may constantly ask about a spouse's relationships with many people, or insist that the partner has no outside friends. He or she may constantly express suspicion that a partner is involved with others. The suspicious person doesn't feel vulnerable, but hurt, hurt by the fact that the spouse feels the need or right to have contact with another person (ex-partner, friend, family member, etc.). The possessive partner doesn't see the need for it and doesn't accept it. In that context, communicating and accepting differences are essential. Making an issue of it can work against the possessive person.
- Being involved in a relationship is taking the risk of being hurt, being vulnerable because of being intimate.

Ask each member of the group: Do you think your partner would make a decision in favour of your relationship or a decision to benefit himself alone? Then ask if she would make a decision in favour of the relationship or to benefit her partner. If either answer is "No", there is a need for both partners to talk and to try to resolve doubts or conflicts. Doubts enhance insecurity and affect trust, creating all sorts of consequences.

Ask each person: What is the percentage of problems that have occurred in your relationship that were related to jealousy? Ask each to describe events that made her jealous and to explain how she dealt with them in the past. Ask the person to describe how she would deal with them today. Would it be in the same way?

This question can also be reversed, asking each member of the group what percentage of their problems have their roots in a partner's jealousy? How did she deal with this in the past? How would she deal with this today?

If your partner is the one that is constantly jealous:

- You may not be able to change your partner, but there is a lot you can do to understand jealousy, and some things you can do to help reduce it.
- Ask yourself: Am I to blame? Are there real issues of emotional threat?
- Do you flirt with others? Do you often say, "I don't mean anything by it." Or "I was just having fun." Anytime someone uses "I don't mean anything by it.", there is a real reason for suspicion.
- Is a former partner still in your life, and do you flirt with this person? Many people have had a significant relationship prior to their marriage. These relationships should be dealt with maturely, by not bringing them up unless necessary (for example, when dealing with issues regarding children of that relationship). If you have not really let go of this person from the past, your spouse's jealousy may be rational and well-founded. There may be an emotional threat to your relationship. You need to terminate the past relationship NOW. Grow up, move on, love and invest in the here and now.
- Is an adulterous relationship with another a present threat to your relationship with your partner? The most severe cause of rational jealousy is adultery, and it always has consequences. Adultery can cripple a relationship because, once trust is broken, it is slow to mend. Distrust may last for years or entirely destroy a relationship. If this is true in your relationship, you may need to make your schedule an open book and keep your spouse informed of your whereabouts at all times.
- Put a stop to all flirting, bury past relationships, and stop all adultery.

If, in your heart, you feel there is no real reason for your partner to be jealous, then you may be involved in a situation of irrational jealousy. A common cause for irrational jealousy is childhood emotional neglect or abuse. If your spouse was abused, and especially if your spouse was sexually abused, you may find chronic mistrust, jealousy, and often addictions.

In the current situation that faces you, as a victim of abuse who certainly has a lot of distrust, there is relatively little you can do. It's even worse if he has been unfaithful as well. Your spouse must come to the conclusion that he must regain your trust. You can encourage him to stay with the program and to do his best. When you feel you can do it, you can reassure him. But, the first steps must be his, and his alone.

IMPORTANT: Do NOT try to deal with your partner's past abuse problems yourself. There's already anger and a lack of trust and this may make it worse. Leave this to the professionals.

Session 19

Purpose:

To show that feelings of jealousy can be overcome. A couple from the community who have experienced feelings of jealousy will share their experience with the group.

How to do the activity:

Before the session, meet the couple (the couple must have been identified and briefed as to your expectations and as to their role before the group session started: if you cannot find a couple to participate, try to find a woman and adapt the questions for her) and provide some background information on how the group is doing. In order to assist the couple, you can provide a list of questions to be addressed with the group.

This couple can be Elders, or can be younger. This is not extremely important, as long as they have had the experience of dealing with jealousy and have come through the experience with their relationship intact.

Examples of questions:

- How did you find each other or get together in the first place?
- Where did you live? Under what circumstances – on the land, in town, etc.?
- For the woman: What was it like to move from your parents' place to another home?
- Was yours an "arranged marriage"? How did you feel about that at first? Later?
- We know that people in the past always had to obey the Elders. Do you know the reason for that? How did you feel about it?
- Were you ever jealous of each other?
- What kind of events brought on the feeling of jealousy?
- How did you work out these jealousy issues?
- How can these feelings of jealousy be overcome?
- Is faithfulness important in a relationship? Why?

- What about trust? Can you lose it easily? What can you do to regain trust?
- What would you recommend doing to deal with feelings of jealousy?

Have the couple come at the beginning of the session and introduce them to the group. Being present at the beginning could help the couple understand the group's dynamics.

The group can ask questions as the couple talks about their experience or at the end of the presentation. Choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Everyone has a right to a healthy relationship: "People don't have to be abusers or be abused."

Session 20

Purpose:

To discuss men's and women's stereotypical characteristics and roles.

To show how believing in rigid and traditional roles of the sexes can lead to conflict in today's very different world.

How to do the activity:

List what you think are stereotypical characteristics and roles of men and women. Use one flipchart to list characteristics and roles of men and another to list those of women. Expect something like:

- Characteristics of a man: tough, independent, and self-reliant.
- Stereotyped role of a man: main provider of food (by hunting and fishing), sole provider of income, and decision-maker for the family.
- Characteristics of a woman: tender, dependent and possessing nurturing skills to take care of the kids and meet the emotional needs of the family.
- Stereotyped role of a woman: get married, have kids, sew, cook and clean.
- In the Inuit culture, these role stereotypes are hard to overcome, because in the past, this was often true. Men had to hunt, and women were the ones who looked after the kids, cooked, and took care of the clothing. In the past, roles were rigid, determined from birth. It is understandable that there are problems now. Many older people still retain these views of the roles of the sexes. This is no longer true in today's world.
- Assigning rigid characteristics and roles to a partner can lead to conflict and abuse when the characteristics and roles change. Our very world is changing, and the roles that worked in the past are not as relevant today.

Ask for examples: Some of these might be....

- A man who sees himself as the only provider and feels threatened when his partner decides to sew and get paid for it, or gets a well-paid government job.

- A man who doesn't work and doesn't provide but still expects to be the decision-maker becomes abusive when his partner (who does work and gets a pretty good salary) doesn't spend the money as he wishes.

Stereotypical characteristics and roles also can define a relationship based on the tasks each partner is "supposed" to do: the men go hunting and fishing, the women stay home and clean the house.

When a partner hasn't done the task he/she is supposed to do (ex: the man didn't catch anything, the woman didn't clean the house), it's easy to blame and to compare who is doing more than the other, bringing on conflict. Ask the group to think of similar situations they have experienced or witnessed and talk about them.

Are you pressured by friends (or family) to behave in a certain way? How does this make you feel? What is your response when they do this?

Do you get unwanted pressure about having children? How do you respond?

Serving each other out of love rather than expectations due to sexual stereotypes or being harassed or forced. How much better the relationship could be if people thought about each other and did things because they wanted to make their partner happier or to surprise and please them…

Refer to the equality wheel to show that an equal relationship is not based on tasks each partner has to do but on sharing them and being flexible in the way you consider roles. There's nothing wrong with a man helping cook supper, or with a woman helping care for a dog team or hunting caribou.

Purpose:
To make people see how dominance affects their relationship, and how decisions are made in this relationship.

How to do the activity:

- Ask each person to describe how she perceives her relationship:
  - She or her partner makes decisions.
  - Partners share decisions.
  - She or her partner makes decisions depending on the subject.

Give each person a copy of Handout 21.1 (How Decisions are Made in Your Family).

Ask each person to complete the handout. Allow 10 minutes.

Discuss how their perceptions might be similar or different from reality.

What they want to be true may not really be true. Ask them to try to be as an outsider looking in on their relationship.

- Have people discuss their beliefs, expectations and experiences (the Equality Wheel, handout 9.1, could be useful during the exchange):
  - Do they think that a man should have a dominant role in a relationship? Why or why not?
  - Do they believe they are dependent on their partners? How?
    - Financially?
    - Emotionally?
    - Physically?
    - Why?
  - Do they feel pressured by family or community rules to behave in a certain way?
  - Are they satisfied with the way roles are shared in their relationship? If not, what would they change and how?
  - Do their partners like the way things are now?
  - Have they ever discussed changes in roles with their partners?

If they are keeping a binder or notebook, they can put the handout in their binder, and should review it at the end of the program, and again in a year…., spending some time considering whether things have changed for the better.

Make an X in the column that describes the way decisions are currently made in your relationship. Add other decisions if you wish.

Decisions	**Almost always me**	**Shared equally by both of us**	**Almost always my partner**
Where to live			
Whether my partner should work			
Whether I should work, or not			
What job my partner should take			
What job I should take			
Whether/when to have children			
Whether I can attend church and which church I attend			
How to handle finances			
What major purchases to make			
What to do for fun			
Who I can socialize with			
When to have sex			
How to discipline children			
What family activities to do			
Whether and when to go hunting/fishing, etc.			
When to visit relatives			

Session 21

Purpose:

To learn more about beliefs regarding sexuality and understand how these beliefs can cause problems in a relationship.

How to do the activity:

Explain that beliefs about sexuality can cause problems in a relationship. When things don't happen the way one thinks they should, a person can become anxious, frustrated, insecure, and jealous and could resort to abusive behaviour.

Write the following beliefs on a flipchart and show how each of them can create problems between partners:

- Sex is necessary to have a good relationship.
    - ➢ If partners have not been having sex for some time, the belief that it's necessary can create a cycle. They try even when both are not in the mood, and fail to have a satisfying sexual activity because of not really wanting to have sex in the first place. They blame each other for failing. This leads to more anxiety about failing the next time; they try again, and the cycle repeats itself over and over.
- A person in love and sexually satisfied will never be sexually attracted to another person.
    - ➢ This is simply not true. Attraction is something a person cannot help. Acting on attraction is something a person can help. If a person believes that his or her partner should not be attracted to another, ever, she/he will be very vulnerable if his partner exhibits friendliness to someone else, even in a platonic way. He may feel insecure and threatened even by innocent jokes. He becomes jealous and may become aggressive because he believes that (in him) his partner has everything and has no right to even look at someone else.
- When partners are in love, they automatically know what each other wants.

  - This has proven not to be true. If partners don't talk about what they like and don't like, needs are not met, and one partner will often become frustrated, feeling he/she is not having a satisfying sex life.
- Men are always ready and willing to have sex and/or that any sexual activity has to be started by men.
  - A man who believes that he always has to want to have sex, or that he is the one that has the sole responsibility to initiate it, is establishing an impossible standard for himself, and depriving himself of much pleasure. Failing to meet that standard can, over time, affect his self-esteem and make him anxious and angry. Partners' core beliefs should be discussed in any relationship.
- Difficulty in "performing"
  - Men occasionally go through periods where they cannot "perform" as well as they would like. There may be mental or physical causes for this. It is important that neither member of the couple think this is his/her "fault", and that a medical opinion be obtained before this causes problems in their relationship. Again, being willing to discuss this with your partner is terribly important.
- When one's partner wants to have sex, the spouse should go along even if not really feeling like it at that moment.
  - Having sex when not really wanting to can create frustration, can be painful, and can snowball into constantly wanting to avoid intimacy. This happens because the partner is doing something while not really wanting to do it, and this can lead to blaming one's partner.

Can you think of other beliefs that might cause problems in a relationship? Why do these beliefs create problems?

Do you talk about sex and sexuality with your partner? How do you discuss it? Are your discussions always based on conflict over sex?

Just talking about sex and sexuality in a positive way (when not angry) can help you understand each other and can help solve some problems in this area.

What happens regarding family planning in your relationship?

- Do you discuss this with your partner?
- Do you receive unwanted pressure from other members of your family?
- Do you feel like you have enough information on this subject?

In many cases, partners do not talk this out. If they have different opinions as to how many children to have, whether to space them out, or how to do this, then serious conflicts can arise.

Is your sex life private? (This material is in the victim's manual only.) Once they have children, many people find it is difficult to have any time alone. Their sex life suffers from many interruptions and not being able to concentrate on each other. If this has been a problem in your relationship, discuss this with your partner. Maybe there need to be some rules in your house regarding closed doors and kids?

Reality check:

How did you feel about discussing sex and sexuality in the group? Did it bother you to discuss this with a woman present? Do you feel it might be a little bit easier to discuss this with your partner, now?

Ask whether they are finding the "Relationship Rules" helpful.

OPTIONAL:

If there is a feeling that the relationship rules are helpful, then invite participants to think about all of the rules (so far), and write some additional rules based on their experiences. Invite them to submit these and tell them that the group will review them and that there will be a prize for any that the group thinks should be added to the list for future groups to make the list more applicable to situations in the North.

Session 22

Purpose:

To show that one's family dynamics about loss and grief can affect one's future behaviour. To learn that not going through a grieving process after a loss can lead to violence and abuse.

How to do the activity:

Write the following sentences on a flipchart. Keep the flipchart on a wall during the four sessions on grief and loss:

- "I cannot have my past back, I need to shape my present and future"
- "My healing is grieving from my pain of broken attachments".

Define family dynamics: How a family acts or reacts to an event, characteristic actions or lack of actions, how all people in the family interact together.

Define loss: something that is taken away or disappears from one's life, or, it can be an injury done personally to you by another, especially someone who is trusted.

Define grief or grieving: emotional, physical and spiritual response to loss, a process that allows healing from the pain.

Explain that:

- The way a family reacts to a loss impacts all family members and affects their future behaviour.
- Many families do not deal well with loss, and some do not deal with it at all.
- A person who comes from a family where loss was not dealt with will probably react in the same way when having a family of his or her own, therefore perpetuating unresolved issues in his or her life.
- A person who has not dealt with loss or has not grieved after a loss stands a chance of having long-term effects due to unresolved issues.

This situation can easily lead a person to become depressed, anxious, angry, violent, abusive, resort to alcohol or drugs to escape thinking or to try having an illusion of happiness, etc.

Ask people to think for 5 minutes of a loss suffered in the past.

This could be the death of a brother, a sister, a parent, a friend; it could be having been abused, moving to another community, etc. They should make some notes in their notebooks so they can tell the story.

Ask each person to tell of her/his experiences when this happened.

- How did other family members react to the loss?
- How did he deal with the loss?
- How does she/he feel about it today?

Think for a few minutes about a loss for which you did not grieve, for whatever reason, or grief you did not resolve, due to circumstances, denial, or being unable to face it.

Does anyone want to share this with the group?

To the Counselor: Take care with this, as it can lead into some very emotional situations. If you want, just ask people to write about this in their notebooks and discuss it in the next session or in individual sessions.

Few people realize that grieving is part of getting closure, getting on with life, and healing. It needs to be done.

Exercise:

Writing one's life story.

During the next two weeks, we'd like you to develop your life story.

Writing one's life story means writing about events, relationships and related feelings. If there is someone you lost, but feel you failed to grieve for, you can concentrate on this.

The life story you will write will be yours alone, and you will decide what to do with it (keep it, get rid of it, share it with someone, etc.). It does not have to be "turned in". We do want you to make the effort to do this, however, but we definitely will not read it unless you want us to do so.

It may be easier to deal with this by separating your life into sections, perhaps:

- Childhood (first memories, family history, growing into a teenager)
- Teens
- Early adulthood (up to the time you were married or took a partner)
- Married life before children
- Life with kids
- Life today

Or, it may be easier to do this as a "lifeline".

Using the "Lifeline" form we have developed, you can write in life events above and below a line. Put events you feel were "good" above the line, and those you believe were "bad" below the line.

Purpose:

To learn about the different types of losses.

How to do the activity:

Ask the group to list major losses in their lives, starting with the biggest loss. Go around the table twice, and then ask if you need to go around again.

List these on a flipchart and leave space to write a category in next to each.

Write on a flipchart: the different types of losses below, and explain each of them.

- **Loss of things**: losing things like a house, a boat, a skidoo or a gun.
- **Loss of dreams and hope**: losing a dream, losing a hope, being betrayed by someone, losing self-image, losing part of one's culture, losing childhood, being shunned by the church.
- **Illness/aging loss**: losing the ability to be independent. A person can suffer such loss when becoming dependent on others (needing help for basic needs due to a handicap), on objects (ex: cane, hearing aid), suffering from an illness that will not get better (ex: diabetes, arthritis), losing senses due to aging (ex: see, hear properly), losing the capability of having children, losing interest in sex.
- **Career or role loss**: following a job promotion, changes in responsibilities that make someone lose freedom associated with having less responsibilities, losing one's role in one's community or organization by being asked to resign or be fired from a job, changes that occur due to one being charged with a crime or the like.
- **Loss of routine or security** (loss of systems that provide security, comfort and routine, lifestyle loss): "empty nest syndrome" for parents who see their children leaving home to go to school or to enter into a relationship, changing of work schedule, of shopping system, of family rules, changes of hunting and trapping rules for Inuit people. These are often changes from outside the family structure.
- **Loss of a relationship**: losing a relationship through death, divorce, separation, abortion or miscarriage, adoption (even if customary adoption is agreed upon, the biological parent often has a hard time dealing with the loss of a child), death of a pet, moving to a new community, losing the spiritual relation with the land due to lack of money to go on the land.

Go back to the previous list and ask people what type of loss to write by each loss listed.

Ask the group to add any other losses they can think of. Discuss the losses added by the group and categorize each.

Life stories: Ask how the group is getting along with doing their life stories.

Answer any questions they may have about this and offer individual counseling if you perceive that someone is having serious emotional problems with this exercise.

Advise the group of couples' counseling for next two sessions.

Session 23 & 24

COUPLES COUNSELING SESSIONS

At this point, two additional sessions on couples counseling (conjoint therapy) will be incorporated into the counseling program:

- Individual sessions for couples will run about an hour per session.
- If the sessions are for two or more couples, they will likely be longer, up to two hours.

This counseling may be done as individual couples with both counselors present, or as pairs of couples, or as a small group of couples. It may be done during the same week as group sessions (but at a different time from the groups) or may be done instead of group sessions for a week.

The decision on how to handle this must be left up to the counselors – if the group is large or problems are intense, it may make sense to suspend group sessions for a week and schedule all the couples' sessions into every available time slot. If holidays are approaching and the counselors are concerned about the stability of the group, it may make sense to offer couples counseling without suspending the group meetings. The important thing is that the Counselors feel free to deal with this based on their intuition and knowledge of the present group dynamics.

Session 25

Purpose:

To learn about the grieving tasks of accepting reality and feeling the pain, and the more common reasons for denial.

How to do the activity:

View this session as an opportunity for group members to share stories and feelings. Therefore, during the explanations on grieving tasks, the counselor should allow for interruption and pause in order for the group to think of past experiences and talk about them.

The grieving process is unpredictable. Draw on a flipchart a horizontal line interrupted by spirals that go up and down the line to show that a grieving process has interruptions and setbacks.

Grief comes in stages or tasks. List on a flipchart the four grieving tasks:

- ➢ accepting reality
- ➢ feeling the pain
- ➢ adjusting to the environment
- ➢ emotionally relocating and moving on with life

Talk about the first two tasks.

- **Accepting the reality** of the loss by realizing and accepting that:
  - ➢ Loss is permanent: all future plans or hopes are gone and plans have to be altered (if it is the loss of a job, the dream of getting that job is gone, if it is the loss of a person following divorce or death, the relationship with that person is gone).
  - ➢ Reunion is impossible: no reunion will ever occur again.
  - ➢ One's life will never be the same: life has been permanently changed and the loss has left a permanent mark.

- Most people try NOT to face the reality of loss because it's too painful, they deny the loss, they want things to be the way they were before the loss. The denial can relate to:
    - The facts of a loss. Examples: refusing the use of aids like hearing aids or canes (denial of getting older or having an illness), continuing to refer to a person as being alive (denial of the loss of a loved one).
    - Minimizing the meaning of a loss to make it less significant than it really is. Examples: "the lost job was lousy anyway", "my relationship with that person (who died) was not that important".
    - The irreversibility of a loss by refusing to face the fact that the loss is final. Examples: saying a person will come back or that it's not over forever.

Feeling the pain. The natural response to pain is to refuse it. No one wants to place a hand on a hot stove because they know it will hurt. Moreover, people are influenced by society's approach to pain as an unnecessary experience that should be blocked

Anger as a stage of grief. Mention that anger is sometimes considered a stage of grief, and many people go through a period of anger, general anger, or anger directed at the one they see as "responsible" for their grief, and even for the one that has died. This is normal and people should understand it can happen. Anger is a part of feeling the pain.

Most people try not to feel the pain. They will:

- Refuse to re-enter life: avoid certain tasks, people, places or things that remind them of a loss.
- Adopt an addictive behaviour: pursue an illusion of happiness and escape thinking by getting involved in alcohol or drugs, work, hunting, sports, sexual activities, pornography, violent movies or by shutting off people around them and watching TV.
- Focus only on pleasant memories: remember only good things.

- Focus only on negative memories: remember only bad things and be bitter. This is where the anger stage comes in. Sometimes it is unreasonable anger, not logical.
- Travel or make geographical changes: travel or move to another place as a way out.
- Reframe: take a loss and find the good in it or talk only about the good, use faith to say that a person who died is in a better place (faith should not be used as a tool to avoid pain).

Exercise:

Homework

After this session, as part of your life story, take some time to think about a loss in your life, and these two tasks.

In your notebook, make some notes:

How long did it take you to accept that your loss was real, was permanent?

- What problems did you encounter in doing this?
- What was helpful to you in accepting it?
- OR, Is the loss still so new, or so unresolved that you feel you have NOT accepted it?

Did you try to avoid the pain? Did the ways of avoiding pain listed above apply to you and your loss? In what way? Did you go through an anger stage? Are you still in that stage?

Keep these notes as a part of your own “life story”. You do not have to share them with the group, or with the counselors unless you want to.

Handout:

Relationship Rules (RR)#5, Rules 22 – 25.

Pass out the last "Relationship Rules" handout. Ask how these are working, and if people like them.

Suggest they keep all of these, and offer additional copies to those who may have lost some of the ones they received earlier. They could fold them and put them in a special place for future reference (such as in a family Bible).

Purpose:

To continue learning about the grieving tasks of moving on with life.

How to do the activity:

This is an opportunity for the group members to share stories and feelings. Therefore, during the explanations on grieving tasks, the counselor should allow for interruption and pause in order for the group to think of past experiences and talk about them.

List on a flipchart the four grieving tasks: accepting reality, feeling the pain, adjusting to the environment, moving on with life.

Talk about the last two tasks.

Adjusting, or understanding how one's life is different.

This requires:

- Time: "It takes time to heal" and talking about one's feelings is important.
- Talking in detail about the loss.
- Dealing with feelings: some feelings are hidden and difficult to deal with, such as feelings of anger and blame towards a person who died (ex: the person did not have the right to leave, the person did not apologize for past

mean behaviour, etc.). This is especially important when the death is due to suicide.

Moving on with life: This task completes the cycle of grief and addresses the healing process. It's where a person, after going through the grieving process, chooses to start focusing on new priorities. It includes:

Moving on (emotional relocation): expresses the fact that the loss, after having been thought of, talked about in detail and grieved, loses intensity on a day-to-day basis and talking about it gradually doesn't hurt as much.

Re-involvement: besides the necessity to think in order to grieve, it also requires getting involved again at an emotional, physical, spiritual and social level.

Reinvesting: getting on with one's life. There are a number of problems that one can face during this task:

- Fear of repeating the past and trying again. This can be too much to bear.
- Fear of losing again, of being left behind or abandoned again.
- Fear of confronting the loss -- it seems so large and unmanageable.
- Having some issues you have not dealt with come to the surface, that bring anger, bitterness, etc., such as a traumatic (difficult, scary) experience, abuse, neglect, etc.
- Experiencing some kind of wall that blocks or stops you, and choosing not to go on, but to live in the past (always talking about past relationships, jobs, dreams, hopes).
- Taking the risk by acknowledging the past and present pain, taking into account present and future social, emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual needs and finding the right people to help with grieving issues and forming new relationships.

Length and signs of decreasing grief and healing:

- The length of grieving is different for each person and depends on various things, one of which is the existence of unresolved issues.
- Signs of decreasing grief: people get back into life, become interested in living again, choose to begin taking up activities, and thinking more positively. The time between periods of intense grief decreases.
- Healing: the presence of a scar and a memory of how we got the scar, but without the pain that was present before.

Food for thought:

- You may want to read the following material to the group if you think the time is appropriate. There's a lot to think about in this material.
- Discuss these quotes if there is time: Does it make sense to the participants? Can they use these thoughts in reclaiming their lives?

"Yesterday's the past and tomorrow's the future. Today is a gift — which is why they call it the present." Bill Keane

Learning from the past, living in the present:

- The past no longer exists and the future has yet to exist. So, it is only in the present that we can live. Instead of wallowing in the past, learn from it.
- What did you do wrong? Correct your behaviour!
- What did you do right? Keep doing it!
- Learn from the past with open eyes. Be brutally honest. Learn from what has happened, not from what you imagined has happened. Learn and move on.
- Use the past as a guidepost, not as a hitching post. Or, as Ivern Ball wrote, 'The past should be a springboard, not a hammock.'
- Learn to let go of the past. Until you release it, you won't be free to work on the present. And don't be afraid of the past. It can't reach out into the

> present and bite you. Let the dead rest in peace and focus on the only moment you are alive, which is NOW. -- Chuck Gallozzi

Exercise:

Homework

As for the previous session, make notes in your notebook about how you applied the concepts of adjusting to your own losses and emotionally relocating and moving on with life.

Again, these are for you, and do not have to be shared.

Session 26

Purpose:

To help people see that they have the right to a healthy relationship and control over their relationship. To look at what can be done if a person is in an unhealthy relationship.

How to do the activity: (team activity)

Ask people to think of relationships that were not good for them. It could be with a friend (most common one is a friend who does drugs or drinks heavily and entices you to join in), a partner, a relative, etc.

Write at the top of a flipchart: signs of an unhealthy relationship.

Ask people what signs tell them that they are in an unhealthy relationship. Write them on the flipchart.

Break the group in teams (2, 3 or 4 depending on the size of the group). Give each team a flipchart and a marker. Ask each team to talk about, and to write on the flipchart, what can be done if a person is in an unhealthy relationship. Allow 15 minutes for this discussion.

Ask a person from each team to report to the group. You want to collect as many ways as possible to deal with unhealthy relationships.

Ask if anyone in the group has ever ended a relationship. Invite the people who said "yes" to talk about how and why they ended the relationship. (This doesn't have to be a relationship with a partner; it can be a relationship with a friend, a relative, etc.)

Ask the group:

- Does a person have the right to end a relationship that is unhealthy for her?
- What is hard about ending an unhealthy relationship?

Stress that it's okay to let a relationship go or take a break from it when it's hurting you. Explain that keeping an abusive relationship going or staying in destructive relationships does not help abusive persons. It makes it possible for them to continue their hurtful habits.

To summarize:

- ➢ A relationship is the responsibility of both partners.
- ➢ A partner has NO power over the other partner's actions, choices, or feelings.
- ➢ A person has control of his/her OWN actions, choices, or feelings.
- ➢ A person has choices:
  - ↳ To put up with an unhealthy relationship
  - ↳ To stay in a relationship with both partners trying to make it better
  - ↳ To leave for the sake of protection, safety, or mental health

Talk a bit about why partners stay together. Try to get the group to tell YOU why.

Possibilities:

- ➢ They love or care about each other
- ➢ Children
- ➢ Pressure from parents
- ➢ Money
- ➢ Material things owned
- ➢ Afraid of what people will say
- ➢ It's home; and they have no place else to go
- ➢ They hold onto the hope that things will change
- ➢ They see indications that things are changing
- ➢ Needs, unhealthy or healthy

VERY IMPORTANT: **To Counselor: Use Handout 27.1 if you need it.**

Warn the group that abusive people are often not pleased with a change in behaviour of someone they are used to pushing around. They often are threatened by any increase in assertive behaviour or confidence in a partner who has up until now been submissive.

Often, the dominant partner reacts (sometimes severely) with anger and accusations that can cause the person to doubt herself. This is a very dangerous time for someone who has been abused. The abuse can increase dramatically. It is absolutely essential to have a GOOD safety plan in hand before you make any major changes.

Tell people that if they are planning to face up to a partner and maybe end the relationship, they MUST make sure they have a supportive friend, family member, or health professional they can take into their confidence and can depend on.

You may need to offer separate individual counseling to a person in this situation. Handout 27.1 offers a good assessment of different levels of danger.

If you are counseling someone in this situation, spend time on their safety plan.

Purpose:
To talk about the hidden hopes people have about their relationships and allow them to see that other people have the same hopes.

How to do the activity:
Break the group in teams (2, 3 or 4 depending on the size of the group).

Give each team a flipchart and a marker. Ask each team to talk about what each member of the team wants from her relationship.

OR: How does a healthy relationship look to you? (Might help to tell them to think of someone they know who has a healthy relationship.)

OR: What can you put into your relationship to make it more healthy?

One person in each team should write the answers on the flipchart. Allow 20 minutes for this discussion.

Bring the teams together, hang each team's flipchart on a wall so everybody can see them. Ask a person from each team to report to the group on the findings of her group.

Ask the group:

- Do people have hopes that are pretty much the same?
- The teams should normally have come up with a certain number of similar hopes.
- Where do these hopes come from?

Stress that our hopes usually come from what our family, Elders, teachers or preachers have told us.

However, today, many of these hopes come from what we see or hear in the media, especially in songs, movies and television shows. Unfortunately, most movies or TV shows depict relationships with internal problems or faced with tragedy, crises, or trauma, often miraculously solved in the last five minutes of the show. It is important to realize this so you don't have unrealistic hopes.

Many people still derive great hope from their faith. Sometimes we are able to get hope from our kids. Keep this in mind when you LACK hope – sometimes all it takes is talking to a child to renew your hopes. Keep in mind that you can kill your kids' hopes, so don't depend on them for your therapy.

Encourage open discussion to allow those who want to talk more about themselves and their lives the opportunity to do so.

IMPORTANT: If in the course of this program, you, as Counselor, senses that a participant is feeling endangered or that she should be considering ending the relationship, encourage her to meet for additional individual counseling.

Be very careful and advise her to be careful. Use Handout 27.1 and advise her to keep it private, perhaps read it only in the counseling office.

Purpose:

To look at how one can work toward one's hopes of a better relationship.

How to do the activity:

Provide the group with paper and pencils. Or, they can use their notebooks. Ask the group to think of changes they could make to have a healthier relationship.

Write them down. Allow 10 minutes.

Ask participants to share some of the changes they have recorded, and write these on the flipchart.

Encourage them to talk about each change and explain how they think the change will better the relationship.

Review the following with the group:

Remember:

- A relationship is the responsibility of both partners.
- A partner has no power over the other partner's actions, choices or feelings.
- A partner has control only over one's own actions, choices and feelings.

- A person has the right to end (or take a break from) a relationship that is unhealthy.

Qualities of a healthy relationship:

- Never using abuse or violence.
- Talking and hearing:
  - Listening and trying to understand what a partner is saying.
  - Watching for feelings behind words.
  - Being honest about one's feelings.
  - Saying things at the right time and place.
  - Letting go of the need to win all the time (reaching a good agreement feels better).
- Being fair:
  - Being responsible for one's own well-being and feelings.
  - Not feeling responsible for how other people act.
  - Not expecting a partner to meet all one's needs.
  - Being willing to depend on a partner.
  - Learning to share work equally.
  - Supporting a partner's goals and activities (being glad of his or her success).
- Knowing oneself:
  - Taking time to continue learning about oneself, understanding the reason for a particular act, keeping in touch with one's feelings.
  - Taking time to reflect on one's perspective of life.
  - Accepting oneself.
  - Taking time to take care of one's needs.
  - Being able to admit a mistake and apologizing when it is right to do so.
  - Not judging oneself or others.

Thoughts to remember:

Abuse and violence are both unnecessary.

The quality of a relationship is the responsibility of both partners.

Neither partner can do this alone. They must work as a team.

Encourage participants to add any of the changes brought up by others to their own list in their notebook.

Discussion:

What changes have YOU seen in your relationship since we started? These can be positive or negative. Encourage everyone to speak out. Hope for:

- Better communication
- More trust
- More openness, willingness to discuss
- Better caring for each other
- More sharing of responsibilities, resources
- More equality
- Less controlling behaviour
- Less fear
- More patience
- More love
- Less jealousy

What do you think is responsible for any changes for the better? Hope for:

- Less judging
- Less use of violence and abuse
- More talking
- Better listening
- Watching for the feelings behind words
- More honesty about feelings, more general honesty
- Better timing of discussions, saying things at right time and place

- Less "need to win" all the time
- More fairness
- Taking responsibility for one's own feelings, and well-being
- Not feeling responsible for the other partner
- Not expecting partner to meet all of your needs
- Learning to depend on a partner
- Being and feeling worthy of being depended on
- Learning to share work at home
- Supporting the partner's goals and activities
- Taking time to learn, about oneself, and about one's partner
- Better understanding of reasons for feelings and emotions
- Taking time to reflect on the "big picture" of life
- Accepting oneself
- Being able to admit one is wrong – to admit mistakes and to apologize
- To ask rather than demand

Next sessions:

During the next sessions, you will be meeting with Elders who have agreed to help with this program. They will be sharing their own life experiences with you.

Between now and next session, we would like you to write any questions you would like to ask of the Elders, or any issues you would like them to address on a sheet of paper and leave it with the Counselor. We will pass this on to the elders before the session.

Optional:

Relationship Rules Contest:

If you have decided to do your little contest, do it now. Ask participants if they have come up with any additional rules. If so, invite them to put the on a flipchart, and discuss.

Then, ask the group if they would like to see any of these added to the list to be handed out in future sessions. If so, distribute prizes to the authors of the rules.

Session 27

Purpose:

To show that a healthy and lasting relationship can be achieved.

An elderly couple from the community will share their story and experiences with the group.

How to do the activity:

Before the session, meet with the elderly couple (such a couple must have been identified and briefed as to your expectations and as to their role before the group sessions started) and provide some background information on how the group is doing.

In order to assist the Elders, you can provide them with a list of questions that they could address with the group. If they would find it easier, you can use the questions to guide the presentation, in the style of an interview. Or, you can review the questions with the members of the group and each member can take a question to ask.

Examples of questions:

- How did you meet?
- If you were promised to each other by your parents, how did you build your relationship?
- How did you learn more about each other? Did it take long to establish a relationship?
- What problems did you have together? How did you solve these problems? Did you talk to someone about the problems and if yes, whom did you talk to?
- What do you like about each other?
- What do you think makes a good relationship?
- Why do you think your relationship has been so good for so long?

- What families in our community do you feel are good examples of healthy families?
- What can we learn from them?

Have the Elders present at the beginning of the session and introduce them to the group. Being present at the beginning of the session could help the couple have an idea of the group's dynamics.

The group can ask additional questions as the Elders talk about their experience or at the end of the presentation. Choose between these two ways and tell the group beforehand so everything goes smoothly.

Session 28

Purpose:

To allow the group to talk about what they have learned during the sessions and how they have healed.

How to do the activity:

Have the group sit in a circle.

Write some or all of the following questions on a flipchart and ask each person to answer them:

- How do you feel about leaving the group?
- Have you learned something new about relationships in general?
- Have you learned something new about your relationship?
- Have you learned something new about yourself?
- How has the group impacted on your life?
- What sticks in your mind after attending the sessions?
- What healing has taken place for you?
- What surprised/pleased you most about the group?

Make final remarks (10 minutes).

(All members of the Elders' Committee should be invited to this session).

How to do the activity:

Write some or all of the following questions on a flipchart and ask each person to answer them (50 minutes):

You can do this by the question, which is probably easier on the participants. Ask the first question and go through the group, getting input from each person in turn. Then ask the next one, and go through the group in a different order, again getting input. This engages people better than making one person do all the questions and then moving to the next.

- What positive changes have you noticed in yourself and in your relationship since starting in this program?
- What do you think led to those changes?
- Are there problems that may occur again and that you need to be aware of? What are the signs you have to look for?
- Who would you turn to for support? An Elder, a friend, a group member, etc.
- What do you think are the best ways for you to cope with these problems if they occur again?
- Have you identified changes you still need to make? What changes?

Offer the Elders' Committee members the opportunity to interact with or talk to the group (10-15 minutes).

Provide an opportunity for the group members to ask questions of the Elders Committee once more.

Make your final remarks (10 minutes). Most of this is up to the Counselor but you may wish to address the following:

Resources:

There are a number of resources that are still available to participants in this program.

Further counseling or assistance (will vary by community):

- ➢ There are some counseling services available in Rankin Inlet, including the Kivalliq Outreach Program, some church leaders and Elders.
- ➢ Social Services offers some assistance; if you need help, contact them.

- The Health Centre can sometimes help, especially with issues regarding mental health.
- The RCMP can assist if a situation becomes critical.
- If addictions are an issue, see the counselors at Aqsaaraaq.

How to ask questions:

Please do not be shy about asking questions. All these agencies are there to help, but you must be able to tell them what you want help with.

- Plan out what you want to ask in advance, and make notes about this. Take the notes with you so you do not forget what you plan to say.
- Remember, there is no such thing as a "stupid question". You are asking questions because you need to know something.
- Confidentiality is always an issue. The people working in this field are required to keep as much confidential as possible, but it is important for you to know that there are some issues that they are REQUIRED BY LAW to report. These include:
  - Any evidence of child abuse
  - Any indication that an individual may be planning to do harm to him/herself or another person
  - Some communicable diseases

Self study or research:

Pulaarvik Kablu offers access to computers and the Internet at two CAP sites, one at the friendship centre offices, and one in the Library. If you don't have access to a computer, you can go to either CAP site and surf the Internet for additional information, books, or other materials. There is a huge amount available on the Internet on healthy relationships, self esteem, insecurity, abuse, jealousy, addictions, family violence, spousal abuse, and more. Just go to www.google.ca and type in the subject you want information on.

Counselors can make any remarks they wish about their personal availability (or the availability of Elders) to these group members. This is impossible to standardize in advance.

Personal notebooks: Remind people that the notebooks are theirs, and encourage them to continue to use them if they find them helpful.

They do not have to show these notebooks to anyone. If they are concerned about others reading what they have written, they can destroy the notebook or the parts which concern them.

Program evaluation: Ask for comments on how the participants felt this group counseling went, and ask for their input as to changes they think would make it more useful.

Likely both counselors will be present for this final session. One should ask questions and the other should take notes.

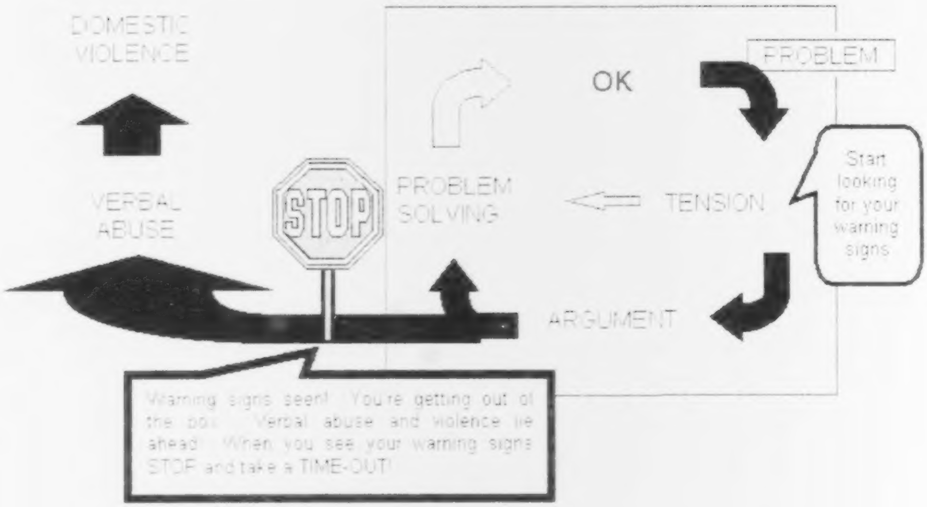
Rankin Inlet Spousal Abuse Counseling Program

Handouts for Victims Group

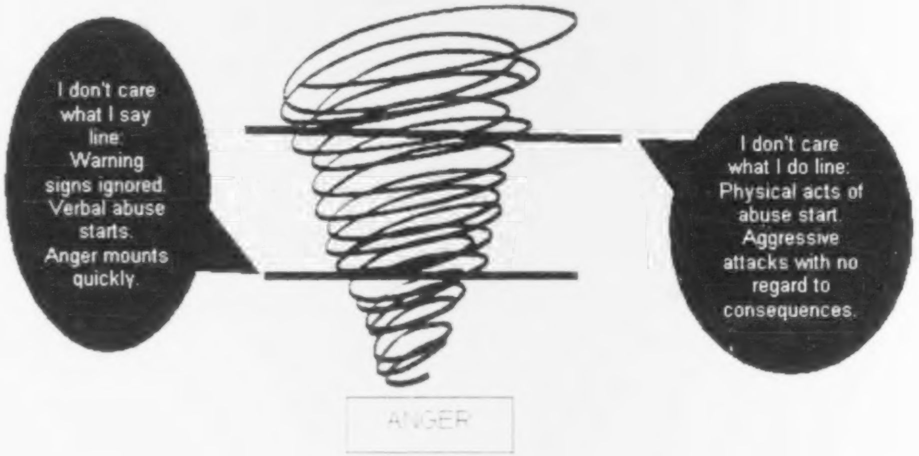
Handout #	Session:	Title of Handout
1.1	1	Warning Signs and Lines (diagram)
1.2	1	Finding Your Partner's Warning Signs (form)
1.3	1	Signs Before Violence (form)
1.4	1	Safety Planning for Victims (short form)
1.5	1	A Basic Safety Strategy for Victims
2.1	2	Defining Abuse (form: make about 4 copies per participant)
1.5	3	A Basic Safety Strategy for Victims (reuse in this session, make copies)
RR #1	3	Relationship Rules #1 – Rules 1-5
5.1	5	The Cycle of Violence (diagram)
5.2	5	Cycle of Violence Stories
5.3	5	Power and Control Wheel (diagram)
9.1	9	Equality Wheel (diagram)
RR #2	9	Relationship Rules #2 – Rules 6-10
9.2	9	Understanding Self-esteem
RR #3	12	Relationship Rules #3 – Rules 11-16
RR #4	17	Relationship Rules #4 – Rules 17-21
21.1	21	How Decisions are Made in Your Family (form)
27.1	27	Leaving an Abusive Relationship: Toolkit for Leaving
RR #5	27	Relationship Rules #5 – Rules 22-25

Handout 1.1: Warning Signs

Warning Signs and Time-Out


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VERBAL ABUSE
STOP
PROBLEM SOLVING
OK
PROBLEM
TENSION
ARGUMENT
Start looking for your warning signs
Warning signs seen! You're getting out of the box. Verbal abuse and violence lie ahead. When you see your warning signs STOP and take a TIME-OUT!

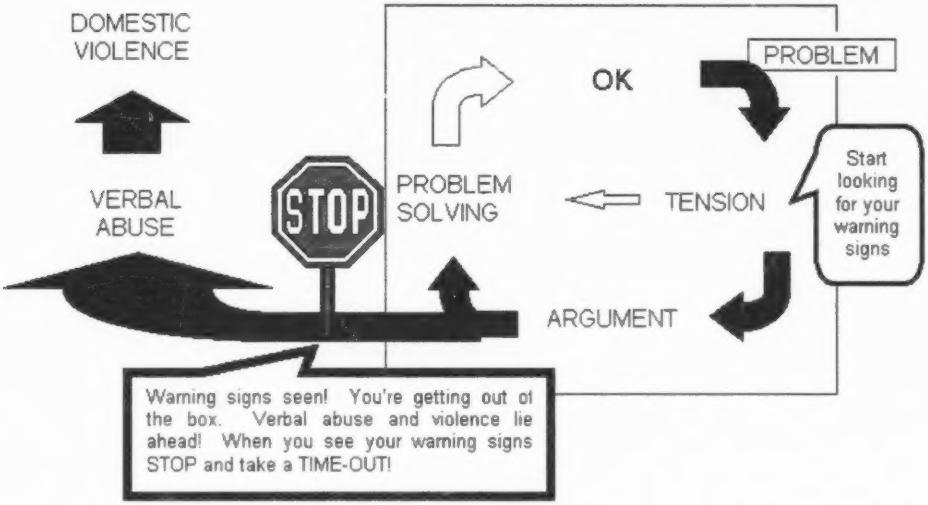
Crossing the Lines


I don't care what I say line: Warning signs ignored. Verbal abuse starts. Anger mounts quickly.
I don't care what I do line: Physical acts of abuse start. Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences.
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. ( )

Handout 1.1: Warning Signs

Warning Signs and Time-Out


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
OK
PROBLEM
Start looking for your warning signs
VERBAL ABUSE
STOP
PROBLEM SOLVING
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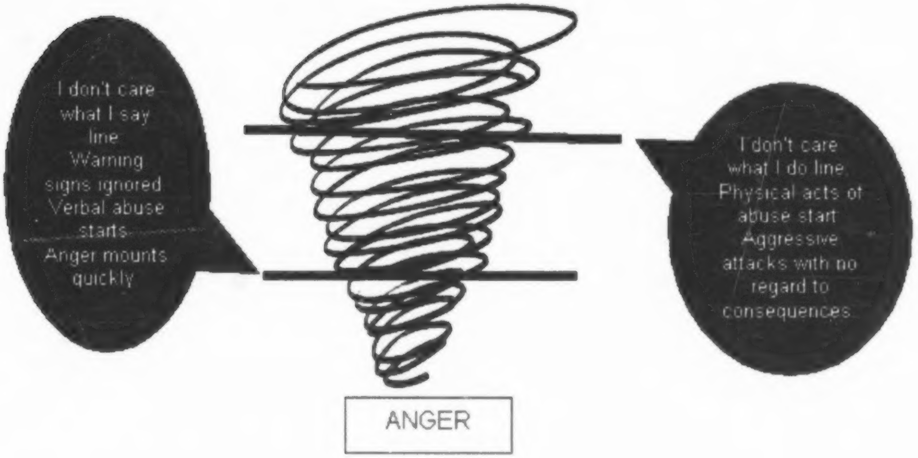
Crossing the Lines


I don't care what I say line. Warning signs ignored. Verbal abuse starts. Anger mounts quickly
I don't care what I do line. Physical acts of abuse start. Aggressive attacks with no regard to consequences.
ANGER

From an on-line counseling course taught by Dr. Wm. E. Adams of Long Beach, CA., also in his book, The Choices Program: How to Stop Hurting the People Who Love You. (www.continuingedcourses.net/index.php)

Handout 1.2: Finding Your Partner's Warning signs

Go over these and think about each sign. Then, figure out if **your partner** does this or not. **If not**, write "NO" under "Does your partner do this?" **If he does**, write "Yes". If he does something ***similar***, write it in under "Does your partner do this?"

Add other personal warning signs for **your partner** in the blanks.

Then, analyse how YOU feel and what YOU think. Add any additional signs for yourself.

WHAT YOUR PARTNER *DOES* (behaviour)	Does your partner do this?
Start to yell	
Go closer to the person I'm talking to	
Curse	
Glare	
Start saying insulting things	
Threaten person I'm in conflict with	
Start saying hurtful things	
Slam door, punch wall or hit desk	
Throw something or break something	
Shake fist	
WHAT YOU *FEEL* IN YOUR BODY	**Do YOU feel this when tension builds?**
Tight stomach and/or muscles	
Increased heart rate	
Sweating palms	
Trembling hands, shakiness	
Flushed face, red neck	
White face, feeling as though blood leaves your head, feeling faint	
Rapid breathing / tending to hold your breath	
Clenched teeth	
Vision seems to narrow/darken (tunnel vision)	
WHAT YOU *THINK*	**What thoughts pass through your mind?**
Mental images of wanting to flee	
Thinking,"He's such a _____" (name-calling)	
Thinking: "Why does he have to do this?"	
Thinking: "I hate him!"	
Thnking: "You pushed me too far!"	
"Awfulizing" (labeling situation as "terrible")	
Mental images of wanting to fight, hurt him	

Handout 1.3: Signs Before Violence

My signs	My partner's signs
Situation When, where, why do you feel stress?	**Situation** When, where, why does your partner tend to become stressed or violent?
Physical How does your **body** show stress?	**Physical** What is your partner's **body language**?
Emotions What **feelings** do you experience when stressed or in danger?	**Actions/Behaviours** What does your partner **do**?
Self-talk and thoughts What do you say to yourself? What do you think?	Words **What does your partner say** before becoming abusive?

Handout 1.4: Safety Planning for Victims

You must be prepared! Start with some notes about planning what to do and where to go if you feel threatened (write it down below). A second handout will help you finalize this plan.

What to do	Where to go

Who can help?	Telephone number
Caregivers	
Social Services	
Women's shelter	
Churches	
Others	
RCMP	

Think clearly

Get support. Don't be ashamed to talk about your problems with others who believe abuse is wrong. You need support. But, there are still many people who wrongly believe that it is okay for a man to abuse his partner and that it is her fault if he does. Be careful when choosing the people you talk to.

He is responsible for his actions. Remember his actions are NOT your responsibility. Do not be ashamed to tell someone if he abuses you again. It is not your fault.

You have choices. There are shelters, and there are people who will help if you reach out. You have the right to be angry about your problem. Use your anger to start taking care of yourself. Faith and trust in yourself are important to feeling good about yourself. Have faith in your future. You can learn from your life and you can change your life.

Take action

Beware of pills, drinking and drugs. Some women take pills, drink too much or take drugs to escape from pain and fear. This will not help in the long run. Alcohol and drugs keep you helpless and you can't think clearly.

Look after yourself. Take care of yourself. Eat well. Try to do fun activities. Get some rest. You have the right to be healthy and happy.

Believe in yourself

You are strong. You need to remind yourself that you are strong and can grow stronger. No one has the right to abuse you. Violence is not a private family affair. There's no excuse for abuse.

Handout 1.5: A Basic Safety Strategy for Victims

Avoid all use of alcohol or drugs in your home. This is possibly the single most useful thing you can do to decrease violence at home. Make an agreement with your partner to do this while both of you are sober and not fighting. If at all possible, consider stopping drinking (or drugs) entirely. When there are marital problems, it is best to stop entirely until those are resolved. Know your partner's warning signs and monitor these if you are getting into a conflict and tensions are rising.

Use a Time Out before things get out of hand. Keep a change of clothes for you and the children at a neighbour's house. Keep extra old parkas (with mitts in the pockets) and wind pants in your porch (or in a shed or neighbour's porch), along with boots you can put on quickly. Do this for all of your children if you think they are also at risk.

Keep some quarters in the pockets of your emergency clothing and about $40 somewhere in the clothing (slit lining and hide the paper money). Post emergency numbers in a place you can get to them quickly. By the phone, AND in the bathroom if you have a cordless phone. Teach your children how to use the phone to contact the police, fire department, or a trusted friend.

Talk to a friend, family member, or counselor about how to handle an emergency call from you for help. Create a code word to use when you need someone to call police for emergency assistance. Leave an emergency kit at a friend's house. Decide ahead of time at what point you should leave or call the police. If possible, discuss this issue with your counselor.

Use your best judgment. If the situation is serious, you may need to give your partner what is wanted or say what is wanted to defuse the situation and calm him down. Protect yourself and your kids until the danger is lessened or over.

Consider opening a separate savings account, perhaps in a separate bank, and have the receipts sent to a friend. This is emergency money on which you may have to live for a time.

If possible, have all firearms removed from the home or make sure they are stored with bolts removed and ammo in a separate place (this is legally required anyway and is a good idea for children's safety). If they are in a locked cabinet, know where the key is kept in case you need to take it with you. Take it to the police if you have to remove it.

My personal strategies:
In an emergency, I can call: ______________________________
If I have to leave, I will go to: ______________________________
In a serious emergency, I WILL call the police at: __________________

Emergency kit contents (suggested), you add personal items:

- Extra set of keys.
- Copies of important documents (identification, driver's license, health card, SIN card, birth certificate, childrens' birth certificates)
- A few cheques, duplicate ATM card, credit card number or a duplicate card,
- Prescription medications: a few pills of any prescription medications you need to take
- Address book.
- Extra clothes and shoes for you and your kids.
- About $200.

If you have a restraining order or emergency protection order, make sure you keep a copy in your purse, a copy with a friend, and a copy with the RCMP. If you visit other communities, make sure the RCMP there also have a copy.
Emergency assistance numbers (will vary by community):

- RCMP: 645-1111

• Victim's services:	645-2600
• Kataujaq Safe Shelter	645-2214
• Spousal Abuse Counseling Program:	645-3785
• Social Services	645-5064

Handout 2.1 Defining Abuse (Victims' Program)

Participants can use the form below to record their own observations about abuse in their families. Use a separate form for each event. This can be stuck into the participant's notebook.

Event: What happened, what **form** of abuse?	**Examples:** beating, cursing, taking cheques
Kind of abuse: (circle one or more) ->	Physical Emotional/verbal Spiritual Financial Sexual Other:________
Impaired during incident? Circle one ->	Impaired Not impaired
Impact on me:	**Impact on kids or other family members:**
How could this abuse be prevented or avoided?	**What can I do to protect myself if this happens again?**
Questions for counselors:	

Relationship Rules (RR)#1, Rules 1 - 5

Author: Hara Marano, Psychology Today

Here are 5 basic rules for relationships, the first of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

1. **Choose a partner wisely and well.**

We are attracted to people for all kinds of reasons. Sometimes they remind us of someone from our past, or may shower us with gifts and make us feel important. This can be deceiving. Evaluate a potential partner carefully. Look at their character, personality, values, their generosity of spirit, the relationship between their words and actions, and especially their relationships with others. Don't rush. Make sure you would want this person as the mother/father of your children.

2. **Know your partner's beliefs about relationships.**

Different people have different beliefs about relationships. You don't want to fall in love with someone who is dishonest in their relationships. They will be dishonest with you, eventually. Communicate, and discuss this sort of thing.

3. **Don't confuse sex with love.**

In the beginning of a relationship, sexual attraction and pleasure in sex are often mistaken for love. Make sure there is more to your relationship than this.

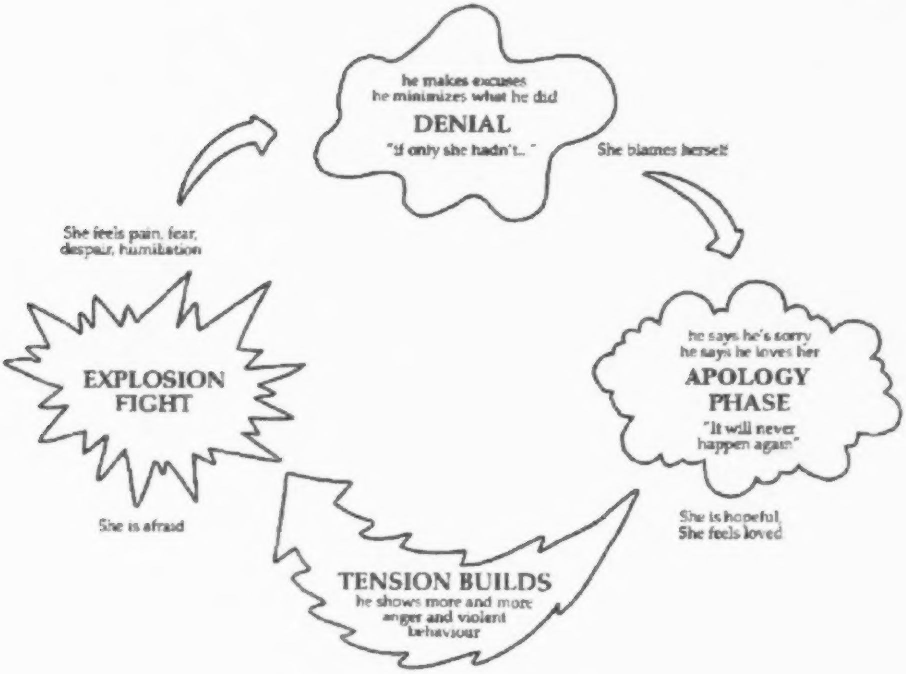
4. **Know your needs and speak up for them clearly.**

A relationship is not a guessing game. Many people, men as well as women, fear stating their needs and, as a result, do this poorly. The result is disappointment at not getting what they want and anger at a partner for not having met their (unstated) needs. Closeness cannot occur without honesty. Your partner is not a mind reader. Communicate with him/her.

5. **View yourselves as a team.**

Think of yourself and your partner as working together toward a goal you both share. This means you each bring different perspectives and strengths to make a team that is stronger than either of yourselves alone.

Handout 5.1: The Cycle of Violence


he makes excuses
he minimizes what he did
DENIAL
"If only she hadn't..."
She blames herself
he says he's sorry
he says he loves her
APOLOGY PHASE
"It will never happen again"
She is hopeful,
She feels loved
TENSION BUILDS
he shows more and more anger and violent behaviour
She is afraid
EXPLOSION FIGHT
She feels pain, fear, despair, humiliation

The Cycle of Violence can cover a long or short period of time

The violence usually gets worse

The apology or "honeymoon" phase will eventually disappear.

Denial persists in some people, and disappears in some.

Handout 5.2: Cycle of Violence Stories

Read the following stories and see if you can determine which stage applies to each. The stages are: **Apology** ("honeymoon") phase, **Tension-building** phase, **Violence** (explosive) phase, **Denial** phase.

First story

A family is at home. The husband comes in with candy for the kids. He makes tea for his wife and is telling her he loves her and is sorry for hitting her. He says he will never do it again. He says he is going to quit drinking. He gives his wife some money to go to the bingo. He tells the kids he is never going to hit their mom again.

Second story

The family is at Grandma's for dinner. The husband is pacing up and down. He is very restless. He tells the kids to shut up or go outside. The wife is with her mother in the kitchen and is very nervous. The husband goes into the kitchen and yells at his wife, "When is that damn dinner going to be ready?" Grandma says, "It's almost ready". The husband says, "I wasn't talking to you." He stomps back into the living room and sits on the couch looking very angry.

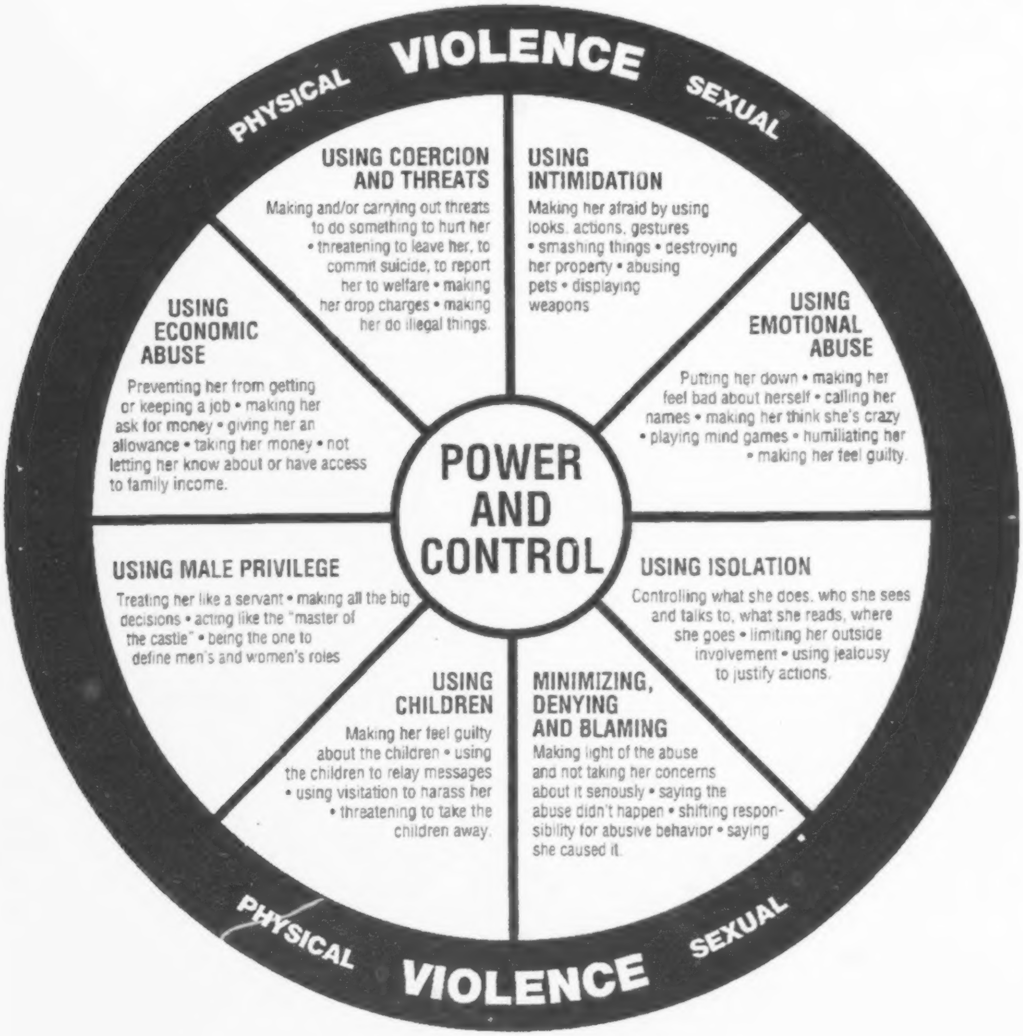
Third story

The family is walking home from Grandma's. The husband says, "How come you can't cook like your mother?" The wife is walking with her head down, the kids are getting nervous. The husband says, "I asked you a question, bitch, you're too stupid to learn how to cook, aren't you? Say it! Say, "I'm too stupid to learn." The wife says very quietly under her breath, "I'm not stupid." The husband says, "What did you say?" He grabs her by the hair and slaps her face. The kids run home so they can hide before their parents get there.

Fourth story

The family is at home. The wife sits at the table with her head in her hands. The husband stands over his wife and says, "Why do you always talk back? You know it makes me mad." Grandma comes in and sends the kids outside. The husband leaves and Grandma sits down at the table. She takes her daughter's hand and says, "That's the way men are, just try not to make him mad. Here, I brought over some dry fish he likes that. You're lucky he has a job. Lots of the other people in town are on welfare."

Handout 5.3: Power and Control Wheel



USING COERCION AND THREATS
Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her • threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges • making her do illegal things.

USING INTIMIDATION
Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures • smashing things • destroying her property • abusing pets • displaying weapons

USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE
Putting her down • making her feel bad about herself • calling her names • making her think she's crazy • playing mind games • humiliating her • making her feel guilty.

USING ISOLATION
Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING
Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused it.

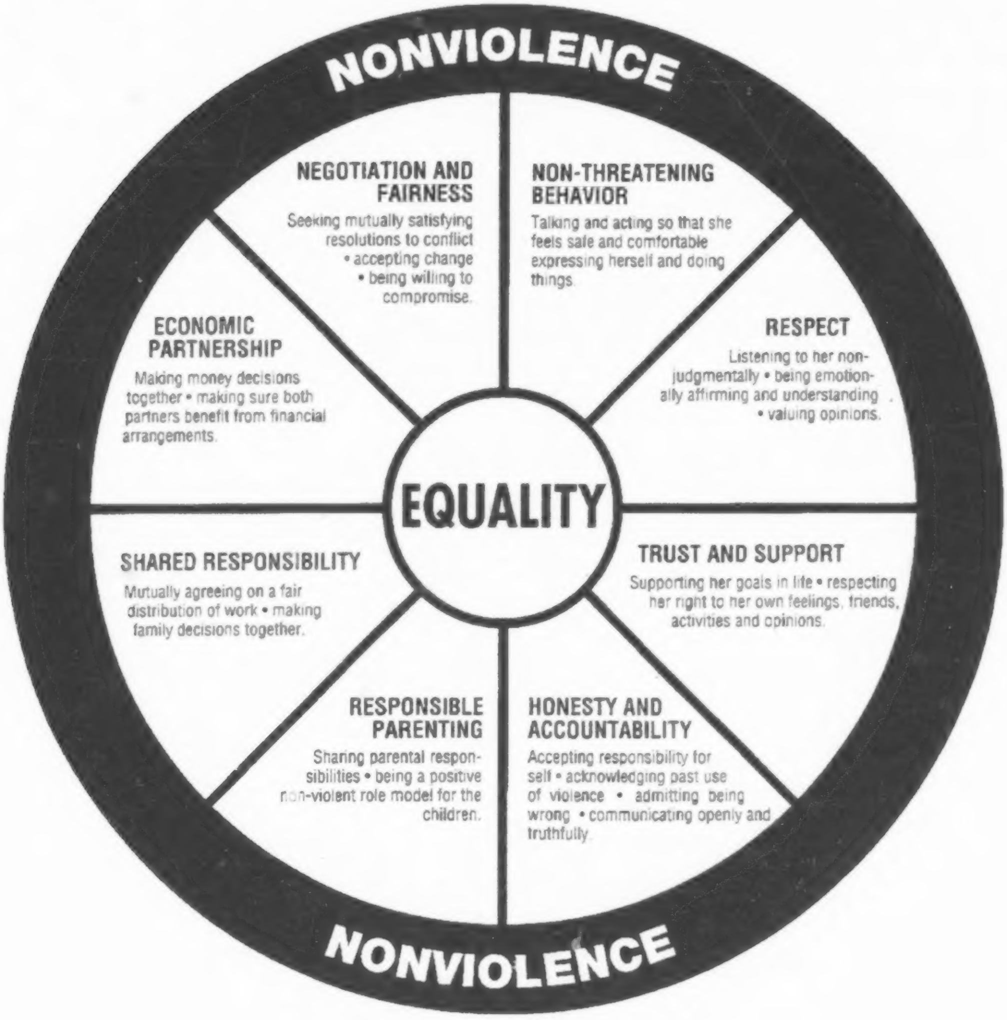
USING CHILDREN
Making her feel guilty about the children • using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass her • threatening to take the children away.

USING MALE PRIVILEGE
Treating her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE
Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

Minnesota Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806

Handout 9.1: Equality Wheel



NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS

Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict • accepting change • being willing to compromise.

NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR

Talking and acting so that she feels safe and comfortable expressing herself and doing things.

RESPECT

Listening to her non-judgmentally • being emotionally affirming and understanding • valuing opinions.

TRUST AND SUPPORT

Supporting her goals in life • respecting her right to her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions.

HONESTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accepting responsibility for self • acknowledging past use of violence • admitting being wrong • communicating openly and truthfully.

RESPONSIBLE PARENTING

Sharing parental responsibilities • being a positive non-violent role model for the children.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work • making family decisions together.

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Making money decisions together • making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.

Minnesota Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806

Relationship Rules (RR)#2, Rules 6 – 10

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 5 basic rules for relationships, second of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

6. Know how to respect and manage differences.

Disagreements don't sink relationships. Lack of respect and name-calling does. Learn how to handle negative feelings, as these will occur due to differences between two people. Avoiding conflicts is NOT managing them. Understanding this is essential.

7. Ask questions honestly, but don't threaten.

If you don't understand or like something your partner is doing, ask about it and why he or she is doing it. Talk and explore, don't assume.

8. Solve problems as they arise.

Don't let resentments simmer. Most of what goes wrong in relationships can be traced to hurt feelings, leading partners to erect defences against one another and to become strangers or enemies.

9. Learn to negotiate. And to re-negotiate.

Modern relationships no longer rely on cultural roles. Couples create their own roles, so almost every act requires negotiation. It works best when good will prevails. Because people's needs and life's demands change over time, good relationships are constantly negotiated and re-negotiated.

10. Listen, truly listen...and don't judge.

Listen to your partner's concerns and complaints without judgment. Much of the time, just having someone listen is all we need. "Being there" and listening opens the door to confiding. Try hard to look at things from your partner's perspective as well as your own.

Handout 9.2: Understanding Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is how good we feel about who we are. The impact of self-esteem, or the lack of it, is quite complicated and far-reaching.

Self-esteem affects just about everything we think, say, and do. It affects:

- How we see the world and our place in it.
- How others see and treat us.
- The choices we make, about what we will do with our lives and with whom we will be involved.
- Our ability to give and receive love.
- Our ability to take action to change things that need to be changed.

Linda Tschirhart Sanford, Mary Ellen Donovan, Women & Self-Esteem

Accepting who we are can make a huge impact on our lives.

Someone with healthy self-esteem:

- is aware of her potential
- knows she is unique
- values and respects herself

She knows:

- that her imperfections or inadequacies are not inherently bad
- that they do not define her value as a person.

She knows:

- that no one's perfect,
- it's human to have limitations
- everyone makes mistakes

Regardless of self-esteem status, everyone doubts their own self-worth at one time or another during their lifetimes. We tend to compare ourselves to others. When this self-comparison is occasional, it can be beneficial. It helps us reach goals and ideals that we admire and respect in other people. However, when self-comparison becomes all-consuming; and, when we think we do not measure up to our perception of others, it can become self-destructive. The quality of our lives can become severely limited. Although it may not be easy, it's not impossible to feel better about yourself.

Positive self-talk is the key to feeling better

Tips to Boost Your Self-esteem

- **Accept who you are** -- strengths and weaknesses, feelings, emotions. This doesn't mean you don't have to work on things.
- **Forgive yourself for mistakes** -- see these as opportunities to learn and grow.
- **Take alone time**: read, play, walk, go fishing, write... to nurture yourself. Develop your talents and abilities.
- **Share quality time with your children**: take them on a walk, take them fishing, teach them to make mikku or pipsi, let them make cookies, read to them. Their admiration will make YOU feel better.
- **Trust your thoughts and intuitions**. Do what makes ***you*** feel happy and fulfilled.
- **Take pride in your achievements.** And your children are part of your achievements.
- **Set realistic goals.** You may not be a Susan Aglukark, but can you share your talent in a church choir?
- **Replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk** and kind, loving statements.
- When something goes wrong, **instead of blaming yourself**, feeling that you must have done something wrong, **learn to accept that it may not have anything to do with you.**
- **Don't depend on others to make you feel good, look inside yourself**. This will help you deal with rejection, and rejection is a part of life.
- **Exercise, eat right, and get plenty of sleep.** Being exhausted and out of shape can leave you feeling more vulnerable to insecurity, anxiety, and depression.
- **Surround yourself with positive, healthy people.**
- **Get involved in projects** that help: church, scouts, athletics, literacy programs, community events.
- **Seek counseling or self-help/support groups.** You may find these helpful or comforting as they tend to help guide your choices.
- **Make conscious, healthy choices. Make choices that leave you better rather than worse off.** Make choices that mesh with your beliefs, values, and actions. Be honest.

Always remember you are not alone in feeling the way you do. Many, many people have felt this. It is what you do with the knowledge that really matters.

Relationship Rules (RR)#3, Rules 11 - 16

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 6 basic rules for relationships, third of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

11. Work hard at maintaining closeness.

Closeness doesn't happen by itself. In its absence, people drift apart and are susceptible to affairs. A good relationship isn't an end goal; it's a lifelong process maintained through regular attention.

12. Take a long-range view.

A marriage is an agreement to spend a future together. Check out your dreams with each other regularly to make sure you're both on the same path. Update your dreams regularly.

13. Never underestimate the power of good grooming.

Nothing says, "I don't care" like coming into an intimate relationship personally dirty. Keep yourself clean or make yourself clean for your partner.

14. Sex is good. Pillow talk is better.

Sex is easy; intimacy is difficult. It requires honesty, openness, self-disclosure, and sharing concerns, fears, and sadness as well as hopes and dreams.

15. Never go to sleep angry. Try a little tenderness.

Try to live by this and your relationship will get easier. Even if you can't solve a problem by bedtime, call a truce, say how much you love each other and go to bed with respect, regard, and love.

16. Apologize, apologize, apologize.

Anyone can make a mistake. It's essential you try to repair these. Willingness to apologize is highly predictive of marital happiness. Your repair attempts can be clumsy or funny, even sarcastic, but willingness to make up after an argument is central to every happy marriage.

Relationship Rules (RR)#4, Rules 17 – 21

Author: Hara Marano, Psychology Today

Here are 5 basic rules for relationships, fourth of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

17. Reduce dependency.

Some dependency is good, but complete dependency on a partner for *all* one's needs invites unhappiness. We're all dependent to a degree -- on friends, mentors, spouses….and men have just as many dependency needs as women. Just don't overwhelm your partner with neediness.

18. Maintain self-respect and self-esteem.

It's easier for someone to like you and to be around you when you like yourself. Research has shown that the more roles people fill, the better their self-esteem. Meaningful work -- paid or volunteer -- has long been one of the most important ways to exercise and fortify a sense of self.

19. Enrich your relationship

A relationship can be made richer by bringing into it new interests from outside the relationship. The more passions in life that you have, and share, the richer your relationship will be.

20. Cooperate, cooperate, cooperate.

Share responsibilities in life. Relationships work ONLY when they are two-way streets, with much give and take. You should both spend time with the kids, don't leave all school duties to one parent. You should also share responsibilities around the house as this not only makes your spouse feel better, but it sets a good example for your children.

21. Be spontaneous.

You deserve to have fun with your partner, and good surprises add fun. If you are traveling, bring back a little treat. Invite him/her out for a dinner "date". Greet him after a hunting trip with a good meal, including candles. Wake her up with a kiss. Praise your kids, especially when they don't expect it.

Handout 21.1: How decisions are made in your family

Make an **X** in the column that describes the **way decisions are currently made in your relationship.** Add other decisions if you wish.

Decisions	Almost always me	Shared equally by both of us	Almost always my partner
Where to live			
Whether my partner should work			
Whether I should work, or not			
What job my partner should take			
What job I should take			
Whether/when to have children			
Whether I can attend church and which church I attend			
How to handle finances			
What major purchases to make			
How to spend leisure time			
Who I can socialize with			
When to have sex			
How to discipline children			
What family activities to do			
Whether and when to go hunting/fishing, etc.			
When to visit relatives			

Handout 27.1: Leaving an Abusive Relationship: A Toolkit for Leaving

If you think you may need to leave your relationship, review all the points in this handout, talk to the counselors, and follow their advice.

How to know where you stand: Profile of an Abusive Partner

- Low self-esteem. At the same time this person may appear cocky and boastful on occasion. It is a common defence.
- Trouble trusting others, particularly you. In spite of this, they may say that they know you would never be unfaithful.
- Jealous and possessive. Initially, the abuser may say others were coming on to you. Eventually, though, you will be accused of being attracted to other people, flirting, or being unfaithful.
- Controlling. Sometimes this can be subtle. You may be changing your behavior without realizing why. For example, you may "decide" not to see your friends too often because you don't want your partner to get mad.
- May come from a family where there was violence, although they may deny this.
- Passionate! This abusive relationship is intense and passionate. There is usually a Romeo and Juliet quality, which may be noticed by your friends. This intensity does NOT mean you are fated lovers. It means someone is holding on too tightly.
- Changeable personality. The abuser can be loving and supportive one minute and cold and hostile, accusing or distant, the next.
- Extreme mood swings or explosive temper. You think everything is going fine, and suddenly your partner is furious.
- Macho. Strong opinions about how men and women should behave.
- Rigid. You may find yourself saying, "Well yes, this happened, but there are reasons why it happened." The abusive partner will not accept reasons or explanations. Everything is black or white.
- Isolating. This partner may want to isolate you from your friends or family. They may always want to be alone with you. Often they will start trouble between you

and friends. They will be threatened by any relationships you have with members of the opposite sex and may attempt to destroy those friendships by criticizing your friends or pointing out ways in which they, your friends, have wronged you.

- Emotionally and verbally abusive. Sometimes there is no physical abuse until a commitment is made, i.e., you go steady, have sex, get pregnant, or cut off your friends and family. You don't have to have bruises to be in an abusive relationship. Pregnancy is a particularly dangerous time.
- Denial. This partner will attempt to minimize the violence or behavior by saying:

    "I barely touched you."
    "I was just messing around."
    "You can't take a joke."

- Blamer. Abusive partners will blame others for their mistakes or problems. Again, it may be subtle. They will blame others for fights if they can saying any of the following:

    "You make me crazy."
    "You know what makes me mad and you do it anyway so it's your fault."
    "If you weren't so beautiful, I wouldn't be so worried about losing you."
    "Your friends are trying to break us up."
    "That person was coming on to you."

- When you have a fight, they may try to blame outside stressors saying the following:

    "My parents are making me crazy!"
    "My teachers are making me crazy!"
    "I feel like I'm under so much pressure."
    "You don't understand me. Nobody does."

These are pressures and feelings with which we all must cope. They are not an excuse to be violent or abusive.

- Alcohol or drug user. This partner may abuse alcohol or drugs. If so, he or she has a built-in excuse. Remember that many people abuse alcohol and drugs and never become violent or abusive. If you are dating a substance abuser who is violent that person has two problems that need to be addressed, the substance abuse and the abuse.

- Look for statements like the following:

  "I was totally wasted."
  "I don't even remember this. Did I really do that?"
  "I'll quit drinking."
  "I'll quit drinking tequila, shots, whiskey, beer, whatever."
  "I'll never do drugs again."
  "I'm such a jerk! Why do you stay with me?"

- They may also say things like:

  "Hey, you pushed me first."
  "What do you expect when you talk back to me?"
  "You were just as violent as me."
  "You started it, flirting with that other person."

This can get confusing for you. Don't let it. When you are in an abusive or dysfunctional relationship you may begin to act in ways you normally would not. That doesn't make it your fault. You have the right to talk to other people. You have the right to be angry in an argument and state your side without someone accusing you of "talking back."

Risk Assessment: Three levels of danger

Level 3 Risk: Warning Signs

1. Does your partner call you names? Does your partner say things that will hurt you, and then act angry if you get upset?
2. Does your partner tell you things your friends or family say about you?
3. Would you describe him or her as more jealous than most people?
4. Does your partner get mad if you have a good time without him or her?
5. Does your partner talk about breaking up when you do something he or she doesn't like?
6. Does he or she sometimes mimic you or ignore you when you're talking?

7. Does your partner have sudden mood swings?

Abusive Behavior Low Risk

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions your partner may be emotionally abusive. Most abusive relationship begins with emotional abuse and escalates to physical abuse.

If you don't feel you can break up, set some guidelines or boundaries and see how they react. Call them on the emotional abuse. For example, tell them you will not tolerate name-calling. Then, the next time they call you a name, walk away. Let them know they owe you an apology.

Remember, if they restrain you when you try to walk away, they are being physically abuse. Tell them so. If they threaten to break up with you because you demand respect, let them. It may be difficult to do, but if you do not set limits now, their behavior will get worse.

Level 2 Risk: Danger Signs

1. Does your partner say they trust you but still accuse you of flirting or fooling around?
2. Does your partner check up on you? Does he or she surprise you by showing up somewhere you have said you will be?
3. Does your partner track your time? Does he or she ask where you were for an hour if it only takes twenty minutes to get home from somewhere?
4. Does your partner isolate you from your friends? Do they hate your best friend or say that your best friend has talked about you? Does your partner get mad if you have a good time without him or her?
5. Has your partner pushed, shoved, slapped, kicked, or punched you? Have they grabbed you by the shoulders to "make you listen"?
6. When you defend yourself, does your partner say you are "talking back"?

7. Does your partner say he or she would not get so jealous if they did not love you so much? Do they say that you know what makes them mad and you do it anyway, so it is really your fault?
8. Do you apologize to others for your partner's actions? "They didn't mean it. You don't know them. They were just upset."

Abusive Behavior Medium Risk

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are in an abusive relationship.

It is not normal for someone to feel the need to check up on you. A classic sign of an abuser is dislike of the people closest to you. Typically, an abuser will try to separate you from your best friends by pointing out their faults. It starts with emotional abuse and moves to physical abuse. After a fight, during which they are abusive, abusers may become apologetic and contrite. They may be extremely loving and promise all kinds of things. At the same time, they may subtly blame you for the violence by saying you are making them jealous or that they love you so much they cannot help themselves.

If your partner is behaving like this, you need to get out. It will only get worse.

Chances are your self-esteem has already been affected and you are beginning to feel badly about yourself. Being in an abusive relationship is confusing. You are never really sure if it is your fault or theirs. You may be thinking, "He or she has a point with some of their arguments."

This may be true. You are probably not perfect. Nobody is. But often an abuser will take the truth and twist it so you do not know which way is up. You will find yourself trying harder and harder to please them and being less and less able to. This relationship could destroy you.

If your relationship continues in Level 2, seek counseling. You need to be very aware of increasing danger. Be particularly alert to any threats to your children, as well.

Level 1 Risk: Red Alert Red Alert Red Alert

1. Has your partner become so jealous that you could describe him or her as paranoid?
2. Do you often find yourself trying to convince them that you did not do anything wrong?
3. Have they ever kept you somewhere against your will (car or house)?
4. Have they ever repeatedly commanded that you "tell the truth" even when you were not lying?
5. Does your partner say you are sneaky and do you feel sometimes that you do have to be sneaky to avoid fights or to see your friends?
6. Do they say they will die if you leave them or that they cannot live without you?
7. Have they ever talked about killing themselves?
8. Have they ever threatened to kill you?
9. Have they forced you to have sex when you did not want to?
10. Do you have to justify your actions, activities, and time with your friends?
11. Do you want to break up sometimes but feel afraid of what they might do? (hurt you, harm your family, tell others personal things about you?)

Abusive Behavior High Risk

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions above, you are in danger. Seriously consider breaking up. Your partner is extremely abusive and could seriously hurt or even kill you. If your partner is behaving like this, it is no longer safe to date him or her. It is time to get help and end the relationship.

You will never convince them that you are innocent of their accusations. Until you break up, that is. Then they will say they realize that you are the best thing that has ever happened to them and they are sorry. But that means nothing. As soon as you go back, it will all start again.

Many abusers threaten to kill themselves when you try to break up. Will they? Usually not, but your partner needs help and it must be professional help. YOU CANNOT HELP THIS PERSON. You must tell someone you trust. In cases of dating/domestic violence murder, the abuser often kills her and then kills himself. That is why it is so risky when your partner is suicidal.

The most dangerous time for a female ending an abusive relationship is when she tries to leave. You must have a good safety plan done before you try to leave.

You need to show someone this risk assessment, preferably a health professional or counselor. They can advise you about protective orders and safety strategies. Do not minimize the danger in this situation. It could cost you your life!

Online at:
http://www.harperteen.com/global_scripts/product_catalog/book_xml.asp?isbn=0060518219&tc=ae

Relationship Rules (RR)#5, Rules 22 - 25

Author: Hara Marano, *Psychology Today*

Here are 4 basic rules for relationships, last of five sets. Print these out and put up on your refrigerator door. Talk about them with your partner, and with your children.

22. Stay healthy.

Maintain your energy. Stay healthy. If at all possible, avoid things that erode your health. You know what these are…and you know this includes tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. If you are addicted, you may not be able to give up all of these, but maybe you can give up two out of three?

23. Work together through hard times.

Recognize that all relationships have their ups and downs and do not ride at a continuous high all the time. No relationship is perfect all the time. Working together through the hard times will make the relationship stronger.

24. Examine and learn from a bad relationship.

Learn from a bad relationship by examining it as a reflection of your beliefs about yourself. Don't just run away from a bad relationship; you'll only repeat it with the next partner. Use it as a mirror to look at yourself, to understand what part of you created the bad relationship, and what part of you can affect the current one. Change yourself before you change your relationship.

25. Understand love as a tide, ebbing and flowing.

Understand that love is not an absolute, not a limited commodity that you either have or don't have. "Love is a feeling that ebbs and flows depending on how you treat each other. If you learn new ways to interact, the feelings can come flowing back, often stronger than before." - Dianne Sollee, SmartMarriages

Feel free to add to these, developing your own rules. Share with the rest of the group if you wish.